EXPOSITION

WITH

Practical Observations

CONTINUED UPON

The Thirty-fifth, Thirty-sixth, and Thirty-seventh Chapters of the Book

OF

JOB:

Being the Substance of Thirty-five LECTURES.

By Joseph CARTL, Minister of the Gospel.

Rom. 17. 33.

O the depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgements, and
his Wayes past finding out!

Printed by M. Simmons, and are to be fold at her house in Aldersgate street, the next door to the Golden Lyon.

1664.

the Christian Reader.

TOTHE

Christian Reader,

TO

Those Especially of this CITY who have been

THE

PROMOTERS

Of this WORK

SIRS,



Epistle to the former part
fet forth the state of these
three Chapters here presented and expounded, together with the general
scope of Elihu(the speaker) in them; be pleased

to look back thither for some help towards your satisfaction in those points. All that I shall entertain you with in this Address, is only

To the Christian Reader.

to tell you, that, as I have now, through the good hand of God with me, finished my promised Commentary upon the whole Discourse of Elihu with Job, divided into a Preface and four distinct Speeches, contained and continued in six entire Chapters; so, I purpose, through the same assistance, to proceed (with convenient speed) in drawing up and sending out (in one Volume more) my slender apprebensions and meditations upon the remaining five Chapters of this Book: In which it will appear, how (when Elihu (doubtless with good success) had acted the part of a mise and learned Moderator, in that grand Controversie of Providence between Job and his three Friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, and had done both with him and them, it will appear, I say, bow) God himself was pleased to come forth and undertake the matter in difference, giving, as the Supream Moderator of that Noble Disputation, an unerring and an irrefragalle Determination of it, to the full conviction, and in the issue, to the full consolation of Job, as also to the high content of of all that heard it, even of his three Friends; who, though they were severely reproved and censured by God, as baving over-severely repra-

To the Christian Reader.

proved and censured Job, yet he graciously directed them a way to make their attonement, and was not only reconciled unto them himself, but reconciled them to his fervant Job; winding all up in Peace and Love, in mutual rejoyceings and embracings. Now the God of Peace, Truth and Love, lead us all into the love of Truth and Peace, and teach us to profit alwayes by what bath at any time been written (according to Truth) upon those things, which himself afore-time cansed to be written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. That, what is here written may be useful to all, especially to those who are (as Job was) in a state of suffering, till they come to be (as Job is) past all sufferings, is the hearts defire and prayer of,

SIRS,

September 7th
1664.

Your affectionate

Friend to serve you,

JOSEPH CARTL.

EXPOSITION

WITH

Practical Observations

UPON

The Thirty-sisth, Thirty-sixth, and Thirty-seaventh Chapters of the Book of

JOB.

JOB, Chap. 35. Vers. 1, 2, 3.

I. Elibu Spake moreover, and faid,

2. Thinkest thou this to be right, that thou saidst,

My righteousness is more than Gods?

3. For thou faidst, What advantage will it be unto thee, and, What profit shall I have, if I be cleansed from my sin ?



His Chapter containeth the third Oration,
Speech, or Address, which Elihu made to Job;
in which he giveth answer to, consutes, and
reproves, three affertions, or complaints,
we may call them complaining affertions,
with which he chargeth Job.

The First is laid down in the second and third verses; Thir kest thou this to be right, that thou saidst, my righteousness is more than Gods? For thou saidst, what advantage will it

be? &cc. The answer of Elihu to this both complaining and (as proposed) proud affertion, is found in the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and

8th veries of this Chapter.

The Second uncomely complaint is charged on Job at the 9th. verie; By reason of the multitude of oppressions, they make the oppresent to ery: they cry out by reason of the arme of the mighty. To this Elihu gives answer in the 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th verles.

The Third is exprest in the former part of the 14th verse; Although thou fayest, thou shalt not see him. To this Elihu begins to make answer in the latter part of the same verse, and continueth I a answer to the end of the Chapter; Tet judgement is before bim, therefore trust thou in him, &c. These are the general Parts of the whole Chapter. I shall now proceed to the explication of particulars, to plood on to another Williams

Vers. 1. Elihu spake moreover, and said.

Who this Eliha was, I have shewed heretofore, as also the spirit and temper of the man; and it may well be said here, Moreover, he faid; for we have already heard many of his sayings in the

32d, 33d, and 34th Chapters of this Book.

This first verse is a connecting Preface to that which followeth; for when Elihu had given Job liberty of speech, or of answering for himself, at the latter end of the former Chapter, and had, as we may suppose, paused a while, expecting what answer Job would make, he perceiving that Jab either had nothing to offer, or would offer no more, began again; as if the Author of this Book. had faid, when Eliba faw that Job would not reply, or had nothing more to fay for his own vindication, he let him understand, that he had more to fay for his conviction.

Elibu spake moreover, and said.

And he faid many things, and those very sharp things, his words were indeed as goads, and as nails, yea as swords, and spears, in the heart of Job; he objected against him such things, as were in the matter very bad, and fuch for the manner, as a godly, yea aningenious man, ought not only to be ashamed of, but to abhorre: And thus he undertakes him,

Vers. 2. Thinkest thou this to be right, that thou saidst, my righteoulness is more than Gods?

In this verse Elihu enters his renewed suit against fob, or here he proposeth what he had to charge Job with; Thinkest thou this to be right? And in the next or third verse, he endeavours to make good this charge, or to prove that Job had said so; for thou hast said, &c. As if he had said, I will prove it to thy face, that thou hast said, My righteousness is more than Gods; for thou hast said, What advantage will it be unto thee, and what profit shall I have, if I be cleansed from my sin? So then in the second verse you have the charge, and in the third the proof of the charge.

Thinkest thou this to be right?

The word which we render to think, notes more than a bare thinking, even the deviling, or curious contriving of a matter in An hoc cogithe brain; half thou formed this in thy Imagination, and conclu-taffi in jus. ded it in thy Understanding for right, for found, and wholsome Doctrine, for a very truth? There may be a threefold exposition of these words:

First, As an appeal to Jobs own breast; Thinkest thou this to be right? let me ask thee the question, Hast thou said well in this? dost thou believe thou hast? let thy Conscience judge, and make answer. I doubt not but thou will be self-condemned : And indeed no guilty person can be absolved, himself (if himself) being

judge.

Secondly, We may look upon the words, not only as an appeal, but as a reproof, or objurgation; Thinkest thou this to be right? What man in his right mind would think foil thou toldest thy wife in the second Chapter, Thou speakest like one of the foolish women; and may it not now be told thee, Thou speakest like one of the foolish men? Would any man in his wits utter a word of this import, a word of so gross a savour, of so dangerous a reflection upon the Justice of God, or so much as intimate himself by any the remotest consequences, more just, more righteous than God? why hath such a word dropt from thy mouth? Thus he chides, checks, and reproves him.

Thirdly, These words may have the sense of a denying queftion; Thinkest thouthis to be right? Surely Job thou dost not think

think this to be right, I cannot believe that thou thinkest this to be right, thou are not surely so far lest of Reason, and of Grace, as to think this to be right. This sense gives some allay to, or abatement of the former; surely thou dost not think so, though thou hast spoken so; though thy words may have this meaning, yet I hope this is not thy meaning; I am unwilling to take up thy opinion from thy expression; Thinkest thou this to be right? From the first Exposition,

Note:

It is a firong way of conviction, to put or refer a matter to his Judgement and Conscience, against whom we make opposition.

Thinkest thou this to be right? I refer it to thy own Conscience, whether this be right yea or no; and thus the Scripture speaks often. When God would stop the mouth from all contradiction, and not leave opposers a word to say, he leaves it upon them to fay all. Mofes intending to prove that none could prevaile against Israel, unless (God provoked by sin) delivered Israel up into their hands, gives this demonstration of it (Deut. 32. 31. Their Rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being fudges; I refer this to our enemies opinion, whether the Dunghil gods, the Idols whom they serve and trust to, be like Jehovah, the living God, whom we have (and ought) to serve and trust to. You that are our enemies do you think your Rock is like our Rock? I know you do not. The Apostles, Peter, and John, referred it back to the judgment of their Judges, whether it were fit for them, to obey their commands, yea or no, when they called them, and charged them to preach no more in that name, the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, (Acts 4. 19.) Whether it be right in the fight of God to hear ben unto you more than unto God, judge ye. We have received a command from God to preach; Go teach all Nations (Math. 28. 19.) and we have received a command from you not to preach; now we leave it with you, whether it be fit for us to obey God or you. So the Apostle having admonished the Corinibians to flee from Idolatry, presently adds (1 Cor. 10. 14, 15.) Ispeak as to misemen, judge ye what I say; I have given you the rule, and I leave it to your confideration, what's best and safest for you to do. I speak as to mise men, that's a holy infinuation; As if he had said, I know you are wife men, men of understanding, and therefore I do not fo much command you to obey what I say, as to judge what I say;

I am much persuaded you cannot judge otherwise in this thing than I do: There is so much truth and reason in what I say, that you cannot but say so too. The same Apostle speaks again in a like forme about womens praying uncovered; Judge in your selves, is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered (I Cor. 11.13.) As if he had said, I do not stand wholly to my own judgement in this case of conscience, I dare refer it to you, and stand to yours. Thus in many things we may appeal unto the Consciences of those we deal with; & no doubt the Conscience is often satisfied while the Will stands out: Men of much understanding will dispute, when Conscience hath nothing to say; reasome will for their own ends argue that to be right, which (in their Consciences) they do not think to be so. Thinkest thou this to be right? Thou hast said it, but dost thou think it? I trow not.

Chap. 35.

Observe, Secondly.

There is a Light within us that will shew un what's amiss, crenot right.

Elibu doth not direct Job immediately to the Word, (though that's the authoritative and authentick Rule) but to his heart; thou hast a Light in thy self, whereby thou mayest see that this is not right. Thus the Apostle, (1 Cor. 11. 14, 15.) Doth not even Nature it self teach you, that if a man have long hairs, it is a shame unto him? but if a woman have long haire, it is a glory to her, for her haire is given her for a covering. The Light which every man hath in him will shew this. Again, the Apostle (Rom. 2. 14, 15.) proveth that the old Gentiles had a light of Nature in them. which the wed them many things amiss. Thus he argueth; For when the Gentiles that have not the Lam, do by nature the things contained in the Law, (they do them by Nature, that is, by the Light of Nature, which shews them to do these things, that is, it shew. esh them that they ought to be done, and they do them, as to the outward action, by that Light;) these having not the Law (that is, the written Word, published to them in that formality, which the people of God have, these having not the Law) are a Law unto themfelves ; which frem the work of the Law written in their hearts, their Conscience also bearing mitness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or elfe excusing one another. This Light shewed those Gentiles to far what to do according to the Law, as left them with-

There is a generation of people grown up and spreading amongst us, who cry up the light within them, with neglect of, if not in oppolition to the Word written and preached to them. These make a very ill use of this notion; For whosoever bids us look to the light within us, to draw us off from the Word or light without us, erre greatly, and may quickly draw us into the greatest errors both in Faith and Practife. 'Tis dangerous to go or act against the light within us, yet if we go or act alwayes by that light alone, we shall be in darkness before we are aware. Natural light without Scripture-light, proves a false light, and may quickly lead us out of the way, and besides our duty. Therefore the Prophet, when any should say, Seek unto them that have familiar Spirits, &c. doth not fay, look to the light within you for resolution, whether ye should hearken to such or no, but to the Lam, and to the Testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them, (Isa. 8. 20.) If that which is called light within us, speak not according to the light of the Law and Testimony without us, there is no true light (or as the Margin hath it) no morning in us; the Day-starre hath not risen in such hearts, nor do they speak like children of the light. Take heed of striking and so splitting against that Rock; yet certainly there is a light within us that must not be refisted. The Apostle reports that as the sin of the old Gentiles (Rom. 1. 28.) They did not like to retain God in their knowledge; they had a light of God by nature, God was in their knowledge, but they liked not to think of God, but rather thought of the world, and of any vanity, than of God, rather of the creature, than of the Creator; for this cause God gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient. They who obey not, who answer not the light of Nature in doing good, shall be left to the doing of those evills which are against the light of Nature. Such were those things which the Apostle calls (by a modest word) not convenient, or not fitting that duty and decorum, which man as man should carefully and religiously observe. By which negative expression, Not convenient, he positively intends the vilest evils and debaucheries of Nature, not to be named. And

कवे भारते स्वर्गन

And if God were so wroth with the Gentiles for not answering the common Light of Nature, no marvel if he spake so dreadfully against those that resuse and oppose the Light of the most glorious Gospel (John 3. 19.) This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and mensoved darknesserather than light, because their deeds were evil. Not to answer the Light of Conscience within us rightly informed, much more not to obey the Light of the Gospel without us, leaves us under condemnation. The Light within man will shew him very much what he ought to do, and judge him for not doing it. Thinkest thou this to be right? Doth the Principle planted in thee comply with this Position?

But what was it that Elihu puts the Question about? You have

it in the close of the verse;

That thou faidst, My righteousnesse is more than Gods;

Or according to the Arichnesse of the Hebrew, My righteousness is before Gods. The Preposition here used is often taken comparatively, and hath the same signification with that (Math. 11. 19.) where Christ faith (as we translate) Wildome is justified of ber Children; that is, Christ, or the Doctrine of the Gospel, the Divine Light that thines there, is juffified, that is approved and declared just, by all who are her Children indeed, born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. This is a good and profitable sence. Though strangers do not, will not justifie Wisdome, yet her Children do and will. Neverthelesse that comparative translation, and reading, which some contend for, carrieth in it a clear truth also, and serves to illustrate this Text in Tob, now under-hand. Wisdome is justified more than her children, or rather than her children, or before her children. That is, more, rather, and before the Scribes and Pharifees, who pretended highly, that they were the children, yea the chief, if not the only children of Wisdome; and while they made this boast, they really refifted and opposed Jesus Christ, who is wisdome, and in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdome: And therefore how much soever the Scribes and Pharisees flattered themselves in their own opinion, or were applauded, and preferred by others, as children of wildome, or as very wife men; yet Jesus Christ the true Wifdome, was justified by God, and all good men, more than they, or before, yea infinitely before them; he was justified fully, but they

not at all. Such a negative sence Christ intends, in that comparative determination, between the Publican and the Pharisee (Luke 18. 14.) I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: That is, the Publican went home justified rather, or righteous rather, or more righteous than the Pharisee; the proud Pharisee, not being at all justified, nor righteous, but in his own cyes. Some Comparatives imply a persect Negative to the opposite party, others only a partial. Such a comparative sence Ehhu intimates in Jobs assertion of his righteousness. Thou saidst, my righteousnesses more than Gods; Or I am to be justified rather than God.

But some may say, where spake Job this? where's the Chipter and Verse? did Job, or could Job overshoot himself to such a

height of blasphemy?

First, Some indeed charge Elihu deeply, as if he had feigned all these things against Job, or formed them up in his own Imagination, rather than grounded them upon any of his affertions; but we need not thus wound Elihu, to get a salve for Jobs sore.

Therefore Secondly, I answer, that although Job had not spoken this in so many words, or syllabically, yet he had spoken that from which Elibu might gather such a sence, or of which he might make such an interpretation. And therefore he seems to say at the third verse, If thou thinkest this a falsehood, or too hard a charge, and shouldst deny that thou hast said, Myrighteousness is more than Gods; I'le tell thee what thou hast said, which hath given me ground (I think just and sufficient ground) for this accusation: Thou hast said, what advantage will it be unto me? and what profit shall I have, if I be cleansed from my sin? And is not this to make thy righteousnesseems.

But what righteousnesse is here meant?

I answer, There is a twofold righteousnesse.

First, There is the righteousnesse of our persons, which is either imputed in justification, or imparted in sanctification, (as hath been shewed upon some other passages of Elibus discourse with Job) This is the righteousnesse of our persons; as justified we are righteous, as sanctified we are also righteous. Now when Elibus chargeth Job to say that his righteousnesse was more than Gods, we are not to understand it as if he had said, his personal righteousnesses.

ness, in either notion, was more than Gods; for that righteousness which is imputed to our persons, is indeed the righteowiness of God, (Rim. 10. 3.) but its not a righteousnesse more than Gods. And as for that righteousnesse planted in our persons, how imperfect and mixt with corruption is that, at best, in this life? And therefore had Job spoken any such words, or had harboured fuch a thought, it had been blasphemy at the highest rate; and (as one expresses it well) If Job had spoken these horrible blasphemies, Si hechorenthough extorted from him by utmost extremity, and in the greatest da blasphemia anguish of his spirit, surely Satan had got the day, and triumphed suffer ab eo as Victor in this great conflict, not Job. Should the most righteous extorts, Satan man on Earth, or Angel in Heaven, say in strict sence, As right certe, non autem teousnesses is more than Gods, this saying were a charging of God certamine viwith unrighteousnesse, yea (which Satan promised himself, and Storiam obtainstold God Job would do, if tryed to the utmost) a curfing of God to iffer. Bee. his face. But as Fob abhorred to speak irreverently (though he sometimes spake passionately) of God, so, that he utterly disclaimed fuch thoughts of his own righteousnette, hath appeared fully by his frequent protestations against all dependance upon, and trust in any felf-righteousnelle or persection, in divers passages of this Book.

Secondly, There is a righteousnesse of our Cause, or of the special matter in controversie: In which sence (I conceive) Fudab said of Tamar, (Gen. 38. 26.) She hath been more righteous than 1. That is, She hath carried this businesse better, and more according to right. And thus we may understand Elihu charging fob for faying. My righteousnesse is more than Gods; that is, my Cause is more righteous than his; and to say that (which is the most moderate sence) was too great a boldnesse for any creature, yea a blasphemy against the Creator. Shall man presume to say that God doth not carry things right eoully with him, or that there is no reason why God should deal so or so with him! But did Job ever affirm his Cause more righteous than Gods? I answer, not categorically, or directly; But Elibu hearing 706 make so many complaints, might suppose he thought there was no reason why God should deal with him as he had done, and then he had been more righteous in his Cause than God.

The Septuagint read it without any comparison at all, which makes the meaning much more easie; they say not, My righte-

Just sus fum anse confpettum Domini. Sept.

oufness is more than Gods, but, I shall be found righteous before God, of in the fight of God. This Job had faid, and therefore made fo many appeals to God. I am just before God, that is, My cause will be found right and just in the sight of God. And as Job had faid this often equivalently, so once in terms, (Chap. 23. 10.) When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold, or appear innocent before God; which he spake especially with an eye to those heavy accufations which his Friends brought against him, and laid upon him: And even for this Job might well be condemned of rathnesse by Eliha, who aimed at the throwing down of all felf-righteousness, at the stopping of every mouth, at the eclipsing of all humane glory, in the presence, and before the brightnesse of the Most Glo-

rious, High and Holy God.

Prapositio illa Mem verti porestavelab, justus sum a Deo, vel justi. ficabo caufam meam apud Deum. Cajet.

So then, even, this other more favourable reading, which speaketh not comparatively, but positively, I am just before God, that is, I shall be justified by God, or I doubt not but I shall be acquitted, and found right before God, this cannot every way be justified: It was Jobs fault and failing, that he in hune sensum was so confident God would not (he was farre from faying God could not) find fault with him. We may fee (if we have spiritual eyes, or eyes enlightned by the Spirit, so many faults in our best services, as may make us ashamed to own them, rather than to boast of them before men, much more to bear up our selves before God upon them : For (as Eliphaz told Job in the 4th Chapter) God chargeth his Angels with folly, and the best of his Saints are unclean before him; therefore that was too much for Job to say of himself, though that's the easiest and most charitable Interpretation of what he faid, when he faid (as the Septuagint render) I shall be found righteons before God, or in the sight of God.

Our Translation is very hard, hardest of all, Thou hast faid, my nighteousneffe is more than Gods ; yet this Elihu might gather up confequentially from what he spake in the 19th Chapter, verf. 6, 7. Behold I cry out of wrong, but I am not beard, I cry aloud, but there is no judgement. As also from the passage, Chap. 23d verf. 2d. Even to day is my complaint bitter, my stroke is beavier than my groaning . In both places Fob speaks as if God had not dealt rightly with him, as if God had been over-severe in afflicting him, or as if his complainings were short of his sufferings. In both or either of which, Job exceeds the bounds both of truth

II

March. 1. C.

and duty; such extravagant expressions, have no apology but his pain, nor can any thing be an Advocate for him, but this, That Satan who was his Tempter, was also his Tormenter, and held him so long upon the Rack, that he uttered (as himself confessed, Chap. 42.3.) that which he understood not, yea words by which Elibu understood that he said in effect, My righteensness is more than Gods.

Note hence, first,

There is no thought of man further from right, than to think there is any unrighteousness in the dealings of God with man.

Man can hardly do any thing that is just, and it is impossible God should do any thing that is unjust. Let God do what he will, it is right, and he is righteous in doing it: Yea, what soever evil God doth to a Tob, to any of his good people, he is good to them in doing it (Pfal. 73. 1.) Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart, o: clean of heart. Not only is God Righteous and Just, but Good and Gracious in what he doth: though his dispensacions are often very sad, yet they are never unequal; and as the worst of men shall at last acknowledge that he is just; so the best of men, a Job, a David, shall find and see at last with joy and thanksgivings, that God hath been good, yea best to them (confidering their state) in his forest and severest dealings: For all the paths of the Lord (as wel hard as foft, as well those that are fet with Bryars and Thorns, as those that are set with Roses) are mercy and truth, (mercy as much as truth) unto such as keep his Covenant, and his Testimonies, Psal. 25. 10. He that shews mercy cannot but shew righteousnesse to his in all his wayes. As he that doth righteousness, is righteous, (1 John 3.7.) so he that is righteousnesse, cannot but do righteous things. God is not only righteous, but righteousnesse; he is essentially righteous, his righteousnesse is himself. A mans being, and his righteousnesse are two things. The man may subsist without righteousnesse (all men by nature, and while nothing but nature, though much lublimated and refined, if not converted, are unrighteous) but it is as impossible for God not to be righteous, as not to be. How can he who is righteous, yearighteousnesse it self, but do righteous things in all he doth, in every cause, in every proceeding, whether with Persons, Families, or Nations? Is it not then a most BEST uniigh-

An Exposition upon the Book of Jo B. Chap. 35. Verf. 2.

unrighteous thing to think or fay God hath, or can do any unrighteous thing?

Secondly Nore, He that complains that God deals over-feverely with him, or otherwise than is fit, or otherwise than be bath deserved, makes himself as to his Cause, more righteous than God.

If we say a man deals otherwise with us then we have deserved at his hands, we judge him, as to thataction, uneven and unjust in his dealings. Surely, then, if we think or speak hardly of the hardest wayes of God, we speak and think hardly of God himfelf. We cannot think well of God, unleste we say all that he doth is well done. A thought, that there is but one twig in our rod more than is meet, or fir, or more than is good for us, or to think it abides one minute longer upon our backs, than is meet, or fir, or good for us, is to fay, Our righteensneffe is more than Gods; yea, 'tis to say, Our wisdom is more than Gods, and our mercies are more than the mercies of God. Therefore take heed of such thoughts. Though we cannot see the righteousnesse of God in his works, yet we must say his works are righteous. It can never be right, not only to fay, Our right eousness is more than Gods, but so much as to fay, Our right coufness is any thing to Gods.

Thirdly Note, What we freak rashly, may at any time be prest upon us hardly, and is sometimes very uncharitably.

It is very usual with those who accuse, or oppose others, to take things doubtful for certainties, their own conjectures for the affertions of their adversarie, and every thing which hath a likenesse to an errour, to be errour. Elian might have spoken more favourably to Job, he might have construed his sayings more candidly than he did : Had he taken Jobs words with a grain of Salt (as we speak) he needed not to have put so much Gall and Wormwood into his own : Had he not interpreted Jobs complaints firicity, according to the found, or letter, but confidered camsus, quibas them with his scope, his aime, and purpose in speaking so, together with the extream pain of his body, and anguish of his foul, when he spake so, he had never given him such cutting an-Iwers. But

in disputando cavendum, ne en diain adverfarii per falfam confequentiam absurda deduillum gravemus, qua in re bic peccevit Elibu. Pifc.

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But God justly, and in much wisdome, sharpned the spirit of Elibu, to speak cutting words to Job, that Job feeling the smart, might be made sensible of his errour, and at last be brought low, and broken under his hand. Milde words may skin a fore before cis searcht to the bottom, and so not only retard the Cure, but endanger the Patient. The holy Apostle fore-seeingthe murmurings, quarrels and disputes which flesh and blood would make about Election or Predestination, doth not go about so much to answer them by Reason, as to represe them by a strong Reproof, and vehement Objurgation, (Rom. 9.20.) Nay, but O man, who art thou that replyest against God! shall the thing formed, say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? hath not the Potter pomer over the Clay? &c. Now as about that unlearchable depth of eternal Election, so about present dreadful dispensations, and providences, our undue reasonings and tumultuating thoughts of heart, concerning God, breaking our bounds, and forgetting with whom we have to do, or who hath to do with us, call for and deserve sharpest reproofs; Who are you that reply against God! Who are you that think this to be right which you do, or any thing wrong which God doth? Who are you, that you should presume to say (so much as by inference) that your righteousness is more than Gods, or, that it is any thing compared with the right confines of God!

Thou hast faid, my righteousness is more than Gods.

What Job had said, which might give colour for this accusation, hath been touched before, in the mention of those Speeches, or Passages, forced from him by the greatnesse of his suffering. But Elihu gives it us yet more expressely in the next verse.

Vers. 3. For thou saidst, what advantage will it be unto thee, and what profit shall I have, if I be cleansed from my sin?

As if he had said, O feb, If thou shouldest ask me, when or where thou hast said, My righteousness is more than Gods? or how can I prove that thou hast said so? I may soon answer thee, and easily prove it thus, thou hast said, What advantage will it be unto thee? &c. Thou hast spoken as if no good were to be gotten by turning som evill; or that thou sufferest evil, being thy self free, at least turned from doing evil; and that therefore it available thee

thee no more that thou art righteous, than if thou wert the greatest finner in the world. So thou hast said, and in saying so, thou hast said what I have charged thee with.

But here the Question may arise again, as much about the Proof, as about the Charge. When did Job say, what advantage will it be unto me? and what profit shall I have, if I be cleansed from

my fin?

I answer, as he said not the former words contained in the Charge directly, they were only a collection raised consequentially by Elihu, so he said not these words which are the proof of the Charge expressely, but by consequences.

For the clearing of this, we must distinguish of what is meant by profit and advantage, when Elihusaith, Thou saidst, What advantage shall it be unto thee, and what profit shall I have, if I be cleansed from my sin? This advantage and profit may be considered,

First, As to his eternal well-being and salvation; Secondly, as to his present ease and consolation. We are not to understand it as if Elibu accused Job for saying, That to be cleansed from his fin, would be no advantage, no profit as to his eternal estate; that had been impious, and an Atheistical Speech, croffing the whole current of Scripture, and overthrowing the very foundation of godlinesse. Take away eternal reward and punishment, and where's Religion? where's either the love or fear of God? His meaning then is, that Job had faid, it would be no profit, no boor to him for the prefent, or as to his then condition, if he were cleanfed from his fin. This Elihu might gather from those two places (Chap. 9. 22, 23.) This is one thing, therefore I faid it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked. If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the tryal of the innocent. As if Elihu had said, Thou can't not avoid this proof of my first Charge; for he that faith, God destroyeth the perfect and the wicked, that is, the perfect as well as the wicked, saith also in effect, What profit is it, that I am cleanfed from my sin? But thou hast faid the former, therefore the latter also. Again thou hast said (Chap. 10.15.) If I be wicked, wo unto me, and if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head. I am full of confusion, therefore see thou mine affiction; weigh thy words, Thou halt said, Wo to me, if I be micked; and if I be righteous, (it will not be much better with me) I will no, I dare not life up my head, my confusion is so great. How great soever my innocency

nocency is, I have little comfort, or 'tis much-what alike with me, whether I be righteous, or wicked. In these places, and by these speeches Fob seems to put little or no difference between the dealings of God with the wicked and the righteous. Once more. Those words (Chap. 9. 28, 29, 30.) are of a like import, I am afraid of all my forrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent. If I be wicked, why then labour I in vaine? if I wash my self with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths shall abhorre me. Saying this, thou half faid, how innocent foever I am, I shall not be dealt with as an innocent; if I make my felf never so clean, God will throw me into the ditch, that is, into affliction. From these speeches Elibu might charge Job with saying, What profit is it (as to my temporal good) that I am cleansed from spiritual evil, my sin? As for his eternal estate, that's not the matter controverted in this book. The fumme of all amounts to this, If I am cleanfed from my fin, I may be as great a sufferer and as hardly dealt with in this world, as if I were altogether unclean. And hence it might be inferred, Surely 70b was more righteous than God, because while he laboured to please God as becometh his people and good servants to do, God was pleased (instead of rewarding him, as he had done many, and promifed all who do fo) to afflict him, as he useth to do and hath threatned to do to the worst of evil men, the wicked. Thus thou hast said, What advantage, &c.

The word here rendred advantage, fignifieth gain any way, or 300 profunt any thing that is commodious and gainful to us; thou half faid, contulit, utilis What advantage will it be unto thee? Thus he brings in Fob put- commoder flut. ting the question to himself, what advantage should he get to himfelf in this life by living a religious or a holy life? As if he had faid, Doubtless'tis concluded in thy breast, thou shalt get none; And to strengthen this thy unbelief, at least to shew that thy unbelief in this poynt is very strong, thou half laid the same thing in another dress of words a second time; For I have heard thee say-

ing thus also.

Chap. 35.

What profit shall I have, if I be cleanfed from my fin?

Job was taxed for a faying of the same scandalous sense (Chap. 34. 9.) He bath faid, it profiteth a man nothing, that he should delight himself with God. There Elihu accuseth him for affirming in

a third person, it profiteth a man nothing; and here for questioning in his own perion;

What profit (hall I have?

מה, אטיל A vadice 743 profuit, utilibine Belial inutili.

Some derive the word Belial from this root, fignifying an unprofitable one, or an unthrift, a man that doth no good, either to himself, or others; What prosit shall I have? what shall I get? All tatem artulit; the good I shall get I may put in my eye, and see never the worse: In a word, I shall not mend my condition, if I mend my converfation; fo it followeth;

If I be cleanfed from my fin.

The words, If I be cleansed, are not exprest in the Hebrew Text, but are clearly implyed and understood; For Job cannot be suppoled to ask this question; What profit shall I get by, or from my fin? that question were nothing to the present purpose or disputation. And therefore though all Interpreters do not make this supplemenr, yet all agree, that a supplement is to be made: Most concur in this, What profit shall I have, if I depart from, or for sake my fin? We say, If I be cleansed from my sin? As if these were Jobs thoughts, this his faying, Let me keep my fin, or not keep my fin; I see I am like to suffer. I shall still be kept under the red. That's the plain sense of the words; Elibu chargeth Job with complainring of God, that it would be no advantage to him, as to the ease of himself from any outward affliction and calamity, how much Toever he forfook or were cleanfed from his fin. There are two other readings of this verse, which I shall only name, and then Nam dixisti. quid profutura give two or three Notes from our own.

First, Thus; Then hast said, What profit shall I have more by it (that is, by my righteousness) than by my fins: As if his meaning were (which is a very groffe one) what good shall I get by well doing more than by ill-doing? One of the Rabbins takes in strongly with this comparative exposition, between those remotest cato mee Pifc. moral extreams good and evil, as to his case : But I dare not joyn

either with the one or other in this interpretation.

A second gives it thus; If thou demandest what may it profit profuturum sit thee, saying, What good shall I get by further panishment on suffer-

It hash been said before, that those words, If I be cleansed, are

Siroges, quid vibi, dicens, quid ing proficerem a supplicia mea. Jun:

(se: justitia tua) fit tibi

(item) quid

proficiam (ex

ea) magis

quam ex pec-

Rab: Selom:

or found expresly in the Hebrew Text; And the word in our Translation rendred sin, signifieth also punishment or suffering, which is the fruit or effect of fin. So that according to this reading, Eliba in these words prevents an objection, which Job might take occasion to make from what he had faid, or wished rather, at the 36th verse of the former Chapter. My desire is that Tob may be tryed unto the end; That is, further afflicted, or afflicted to the utmost. Against this defire of Elihu, Job is by him supposed making his exception, or objection, in this verse; As if he had said, Why doest thou, or what reason hast thou to defire that I should be yet again tryed by affliction? What, I pray, would that profit me, if I were afflicted yet more and more? Can the fuffering of evil do me good, or make me better? To this objection, Elibu gives answer in the next verse, and those which follow to the ninth; and he doth it (as the Afferter of this Interpretation judgeth) by this Dilemma. Thy afflictions would profit either God or thy felf (feeing God doth nothing in vaine); but neither thy fufferings, how grievous soever, nor thy doings, how righteous soever, can profit God, no more than thy fins or evil doings can damage God; therefore it remains, that if God afflict thee further, it will be (if thou hast a heart to improve it) for thy profit.

This reading, and the sense arising from it, is much insisted on; but as the sormer is very harsh, so I conceive, this latter is very dark and intricate, and grounded upon the supposition of an objection very remote, or not easily to be suggested in this discourse. And therefore to avoyd both my own and the readers unnecessary trouble, I shall take the Text, as it stands in our Translation, and

offer somewhat for instruction from it.

How great finfulness there is in saying, There is no prosit in the wayes of God, I have shewed at the 21th Chap. vers. 11th, and Chap. 34th vers. 9. So that referring the Reader thither, I shall here give only this Note.

It is very finful to say, we shall get no advantage by leaving sin.

We may well put the Apostles question (Rom. 6. 21.) to our selves, What fruit have we in those things whereof we are now a-shamed? What benefit have we got by polluting our selves with sin? But how vaine a question is it to say, What profit stall I have,

if I be cleanfed from my fin ? Elihu chargeth fob with this; yet still remember, he referrs not to his eternal, but temporal condition. And this was Afaphs or Davids temptation also, as to his temporal condicion; even he, the one or the other, David or Afaph ipake as much in express terms, as Job is here charged with, (Pfal. 73. 13.) where complaining of the great tryals and troubles he had been under, and of the prosperity of the wicked; Behold (faith he) thefe are the ungodly, who prosper in the world, they increase in riches. But how is it with me ? Verily I have cleanfed my heart in vaine, and washed my hands in innocency; for all the day long have I been plagued, and chaffned every moment. As if he had faid, What have I got by my holiness, and forfaking of fin? what have I gained by my strictest walkings, and abstainings from the very appearance of evil ? Have I not reason to conclude, in good earnest, that I have sleanfed my heart and hands in vaine, feeing my furferings are not lessned, though my fins are, seeing my punishments are renewed every morning, though I am every morming upon the renewal of my repentance? Thus spake the Pfalmiff in the day of his temptation; and doubtless, this day of his Temption had been a day of temptation and provocation to the Lord. (like that of Ifraels in the Wilderness, Pfal. 95. 7.) had not the Lord come in by his grace, and helped him to bite in his words at the very next verse; If I say, I will speak thus, (if I use fuch, not only uncomely, but wicked language as this, I have cleanfed my heart and hands in vaine) Behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children. And when I thought to know this, it was too wonderful for me; that is, it was beyond my skill to reconcile these works, these providences of God towards me, with his word and promises; nor was I any whit less at a loss, how to reconcile the prosperity and flourishing condition of wicked men, with those terrible threatnings which the Lord in his Word every where thunders out against them. These cross and intricate dispensations puzzei'd me greatly, put my foul into a maze; nor could I spel their meaning, nor make out the fense of them, Until I went into the Sanctuary of God, then understood I their end; the woful Cataflrophe, the miserable end of wicked men, their slippery standing, and their sudden falling, as both are described (v. 18, 19, 20.) Then also I understood the blessedness of a godly mans estate, both now and for ever, in having God his guide and his portion (v. 242 (2. 24, 25, 26.) then I understood what profit and advantage comes by cleaning our felves from fin, though to the eye it appeare not, yea though all appearances speak the contrary. To be cleansed from, or to remove fin is profitable and advantagious:

First, As to the removal of Judgement. When we begin cleaning work, the Lord usually makes an end of afflicting work. For as one great end of fending affliction, is to cleanfe us from fin, (Ifa. 27. 9.) By this shall the iniquity of Facob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his fin; to our being cleanled from sin is usually the end of our afflictions. When we are cleanled from fin, we are troubled no more, we fmart no more: speak then, Is it no profit to be cleanfed from fin, when so many, not only persons, but Nations have been ruin'd, because not cleansed from sin? God gave his own people cleanness of teeth, (Amos 4. 6.) that is, famine or want of bread, because of the uncleanness of their hearts, and lives; and is it no profit to be cleanled from fin, when for our finfull uncleannesses God will cleanse us of all our comforts, even to a morfel of bread? 'Tis therefore a speech both false in it self, and highly dishonourable unto God, to say, I shall have no profit, for still I shall suffer, though I be cleansed from my fin; whereas first, there is more profit in being cleansed from fin, than in being delivered from sufferings; and, secondly, when once we are cleanfed from fin, we are in the fairest way to be cleared from, and see an end of all our sufferings.

Secondly, The more we are cleanfed from fin, the more communion we have with God, and the more peace from God. Is not this a great profit? a profit befides the eternal reward? a profit far better than any temporal reward? Will not communion with God fatisfie us for the loss of friends, of effate, or health? Will not peace with God answer all the tribulations we can meet with in this world? If therefore being cleanfed from fin, we have closer communion and sweeter peace with God, let no man say, what profit shall I have, if I be cleanfed from my sin? And, although there should be no present profit, or advantage, though no visible, no nor spiritual income, as to present comfort, should redound to us in this world, by being cleanfed from sin, yet remember, it is our profit, and our best profit to be cleanfed from sin, to be emptied of sin, to mortiste sin, to destroy sin; if we should have no profit in hand by leaving sin, yet there is a prosit promised, that infi-

D 2

nitel

nitely exceeds all the profits and pleasures which we can have or hope for by retaining our fin ; fuch profit and pleasure, as will abundantly recompence us for all the worldly losses we are at, and penitential forrows which we pass thorow in keeping or cleanfing our felves from fin. The Apostle rejoyced at the forrow of the Corinthians (2 Cor. 7. 9.) But is it good to rejoyce at the forrow of others? thould we not mourn with those that mourn? 'is true, we should; yet 'tis good to rejoyce in that forrow which doth others good; fuch was the forrow of those Corinthians. The Text is exp-ess; Now (saith St Paul) I rejoyce not that ye were made forry, but that ye forrowed to repentance, for ye were made forry after a godly manner (or according to God) that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. There is then no damage, no hurt by fuch forrow; But comes there any good, any profit by it? yes, much every way : for (as it followeth, v. 10.) godly forrow worketh repentance to falvation, not to be repented of; that is, greatly to be rejoyced in. What is matter of joy, if salvation be not? True repentance for fin, is repentance to falvatio:n And is there not profit, is there not all profit in that ? As there is a Fountain opened (the blood of Christ) for sin and for uncleanness (Zech: 13. 1.) that is, for washing away the uncleanness of sin; so there are abundance of bleffings flowing from that Fountain, to all such as by the actings of Faith and Repentance wash and are clean.

Thus far of Elibu's first charge, and the proof of it, taken from Jobs own sayings. How he answers and refutes those sayings of Job,

will appear in opening the next words.

JOB, Chap. 35. Verf. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

4. I will answer thee, and thy Companions with thee.

5. Look unto the Heavens, and see, and behold the

Clouds which are higher than thou.

- 5. If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? or if thy transgressions be multiplyed, what dost thou unto him?
- 7. If thou be right cous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?
- 8. Thy wickedness may burt a man as thou art, and thy righteousness may profit the son of man.

The former Context contained the Charge which Eliha brought against Job, that he should say, His righteonsness was more than Gods, and that it would be no prosit to him, if he were cleansed from his sin.

In the Context of these five Verses, Elihu gives answer to those (had Jeb positively and purposely said, or asserted them)

blasphemous sayings, or assertions. And we have here

First, The promise or overture of an answer, at the 4th verse, I

I will answer thee, and thy Companions with thee.

Secondly, We have the answer it felf laid down in the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th verses; which answer consists in three particulars.

First, That God cannot be hurt or endammag'd by our sin; at

the 6th verse.

Secondly, That God can have no benefit or advantage by our

righteousness; at the 7th verse.

Thirdly, That both Job himself, and other men like himselfe may, yea shall certainly have hurt and dammage by their sin, as also benefit or advantage by their righteousness, vers. 8th.

Thus Elihu's answer obviates Job's passionate question at the 3d verse, what presses shall I have, if I be cleaned from my sin? As if Elihu had said, I know that neither thy sins can do any hurt to God, nor can thy righteousnessed bim any good; but thy sins may

hurt thee, and thy righteousnesse advantage thy self; therefore lay down such wicked and desperate thoughts as these, say not, what profit will redound to me if I be cleansed from my sin? &c. That's his answer, according to our Translation. Other readings present us with other forms of answer; but I shall not stay upon them.

Vers. 4. I will answer thee, and thy Companions with thee.

Elihu makes overture of answering before he answers, and tells him he will, before he doth it; I will answer thee, or I will return thee words. Answering is the returning of words to words; yet not of empty words, but of words hilld with Reason and Authority to resolve him that is doubting, or to convince him that is guin faying. I will answer thee,

And thy Companions with thee.

I will speak that which shall not only take off thy Objections, but their also who are of thy mind, or joyn in Opinion with thee; I will answer thee, and thy Companions with thee: I will do both at once; when I have answered thee, they also will be answered: one answer will serve thee and them. One Line will mark and measure both Walls.

The word which we render Companions, signifies any Friends or Familiars, with whom we usually converse, with whom we eat, or who eat bread with us, (2 Sam. 13.3.) (Prov. 17. 17.) We may take it either more strictly for a special intimate bosome friend, who is to a man as his own foul, as Moles speaks (Deut. 13.6.) or for a friend at large, such as is called a Neighbour, (Exod. 20. 16.) Levit. 19. 18.

Yet the question may be, Whom doth Elihu mean by Jobs Companions, when he faith, I will answer thee, and thy Companions with thee?

Some by his Companions understand those who came to visit him in his affliction, and maintained that long Discourse with him, those three friends of whom we read (Chap. 2. 11.) Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuite, and Zophar the Naamathite. The Kai ross 754 Septuagint conclude Elibu meant them only, for thus they render, I will answer thee, and thy three friends.

But why should Elibu joyn them with Job, seeing they held Opinions contrary to Job? Time, they did, yet they were not

Una fidelia duos parietes dealbabo. Druf. TYT Socius amicus, familiaris qui Jimul pascitur, convidor.

distross of. Sept.

able to make good their Arguments, or convince Job; they had condemned 70b, but not answered him, they did their bufinesse imperfectly, and to halves, or impertinently, and to no purpose; fo that all their answerings were called no answer, Chap. 32. 3. And therefore Elihus might see reason to undertake the satisfa-Etion, not only of fob, but of his three friends, who had not given Tob a fatisfactory answer unto that hour.

Others take the word Companions in a more large sence, for all that were of his Opinion. As If Elihu had faid, I challenge all the world, wholoever accompanies thee, or takes thy part in justifying such sayings or aftertions, as I have heard from thee, I will answer them all, how many soever they be; I will undertake thee,

and all thy Party, Thee, and thy Companions with thee.

Hence Note, He who hath truth on his fid needs not fear the opposition of many, no nor the opposition of all men.

To oppose two is a very great disadvantage; but if a man have the truth on his fide, he may oppose all, though he be alone : He may be an Antipas (Revel. 2. 13.) a man against all men, as that name of Christs faithful Martyr, there mentioned, dothimport. If there be a thousand of them, he may undertake them all, for in answering one, he answers all. Elijah said of himself (1 Kings 18. 22.) I, even I only, remain a Prophet of the Lord; yet he stood up against all the Idolatrous Prophets of Bual, who were no fewer than four hundred and fifty men: That we have many with us, is little advantage, and leffe honour many a time. A long train of Followers will do us no good, if our Cause be bad. Truth is strong and will prevail; its vain to fight against it, though our partakers are many. The ancient Fathers observed, how some were wont to cry up those that had the multitude on their side, and to boast that most were of their Opinion. It was the faying of a Worthy in those times, By my being alone, the word Non mea folinof truth, and the truth of the word, is not at all diminished. One dine minuitur, man and the truth are strong enough to oppose a multitude in er- 115. Distum ror, and a multitude of errors. The more any men, and the more Liberii ad Conmen appear in opposing cruth, the more is God engaged in faith- Stantium Arrifulness to appear for it. When one boasted to St Hierome that he anim. Theod. had a multique of Followers in his Opinion; he answered, That E.c.l. c. 16. the

Multitudo 6cio: um teneдилдилт Саtholicum, fed Hæreticum monstrabit.

Hieron. 1. 3. adverf. Pelag.

UDJ Afpenit aliquando ab oculis ad intelletium transfertur.

the number of his Companions did not prove him a Catholick, but a Heretick.

But how did Elihu answer Fob and his Companions? The next verse tells us how.

Verf. 5. Look unto the Heavens, and see, behold the Clouds which are higher than thou.

As if he had said, Look to the Heavens, and they'l answer thee; behold the Clouds, and they will confute thee: Thy very senses may convince thee, that thou hast spoken these things against Reason. And the Heavens will tell thee, that thy mistake in this matter is Heaverly wide. If thou turn thy eyes upward, and considerest that distance Toto calo erras. which is between God, who hath Heaven for the Habitation of his Holinesse, and of his Glory, and thee, who dwellest in thy house of Clay here on Earth, thou mayest see that thy fins cannot burt him, nor thy goodnesse extend to him. The distance between Heaven and man is very great; but the distance between God and man is far greater; the one is immensurable, but the other is unimainable, unconceiveable. Therefore if the Heavens be so high, that thou canst not annoy them with thine Arrows, much lesse art thou able to annoy God, who is higher, and infinitely more out of Bow-shot and Gun-shot than the Heavens: That's the scope of his Argumentation here, to prove that Job could not, or that no man can hurt God by his lin.

Look to the Heavens, and see.

Both words are applyed to the sense or fight of the eye, yet they have a reference also to an intellectual fight, to the eye of the mind: Look, and see; that is, Take special notice of, and contemplate the Heavens. We may look, and not see; that is, look and not confider, look and not observe: To look and see, is to give earnest attention to the thing looked upon; look curiously, citically, how high the Heavens are, Look and fee.

TRI Signifiear curiofe inri visa, contemplare men-

We may apply the first word Look (as some do) to the truth of the thing, look how high the Heavens are; it may be seen by the spicere, intue- eye, that they are very high, though we cannot see how high they are. The latter word See, may referre to the admirable contrivance and contexture of the thing feen, as the former to the te. Aguin. truth and reallity of it: Look and fee how wonderful, how full of

wonders

wonders the Heavens are; fee with admiration what a vastness, what an existnesse there is in the Heavens above thee. Thus the word is used by the Propher, (1sa. 42. 18.) Look ye blind, that ye may see. It is a Prophesie of Gospel times: that is, Consider the Mellages and Mysteries of the Gospel exactly, view them well, that ye who are blind may behold the glorious light that shines forth in them. There were many blind ones in Chailts time, that looked upon the things of the Gospel, and did not see; the Pharifees lookt upon them, and they were among the blind ones; they indeed had better thoughts of themselves, and therefore put that questioneo Christ in scorn, (John 9. 40.) Are we blind also? They did not look to as to fee sthey were blind when they looked, and blind after they looked: The holy Prophet exhorts poor blind fouls to whom the Gospel should come, to look better, to look again and again, till they faw, Look ye blind, that ye may fee; That is, be diligent and humble, that ye may fee the light shining in the Gospel. The proud Pharisees who would not see the light which Christ offered to them, were the worst of blind ones.

This is the Look which the word in the Text calls for. Look unto the Heavens, and see; it cannot be understood of the outward fight only, for he that looks upon the Heavens cannot but fee them; but a man may look a great while upon the Heavens, and not see them considerately, nor understand what he seeth. The words import attention and consideration: And so they are used oculis intuitive and placed (2 Kings 3.14.) Were it not that I regard the presence est. of Jehoshaphat the King of Judah, I would not look unto thee, nor see thee; faid Elisha to Jehoram King of Ifrael; that is, I would give thee no respect, nor take notice of thee. In this sense the Nomen hoc Prophet represents the Church bespeaking the incompassionate posessignifications of her calamity, (Lam. 1.12.) Is it nothing to you, all re Nubes, que ye that passe by? Behold and see (that is, weigh it well, and consi- sunt substantia des) if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow. Look unto the Hea-densa, nempe vens and see.

And Behold (with like attention) the Clouds. There is some hakim disti difference among Interpreters, about this word which we render funt a substan-Clouds: The Hebrew properly fignifies Thinnes; but a Cloud, is tie tenuitate. thick, and confists of many Aireal vapors, condensed into a body; gualis of suband therefore this word cannot well be translated a Cloud, (saith fantia cali; this Author) but the thin Heavens, that is, the higher Heavens, mues calos. those above the Airy Heaven. Again, Pifc.

Aer condensatus: At Shehווו שחקים phirimum Athera O nubes significat.

Again, The Clouds are lower than the Heavens, they are neerest to us, they are ingendred in the middle Region, nor do they at any time rife higher than that Region. Forasmuch then as Elibu is endeavouring by the confideration of the highness of Gods royal feat, or of the vast distance (as the Prophet speaks) of the habitation of his Holiness and of his Glory from us, to prove, that neither any good we do can profit him, nor any evil we do, reach to his disadvantage; therefore it may seem not to make much for the purpose of Elihu, to call fob to behold the Clouds, which are neer us, comparatively, though their distance from us be really very great : but I conceive, notwithstanding that Criticisme of the word, and this reason, we may well enough abide by the Tranflation, which faith, Behold the Clouds; for though the Clouds are thicker than the Air, yet they are but thin, and are foon disper-

sed by winde and rarified by heare.

Again, Supposing (as indeed they do) that the Clouds move in the lower part of the Heavens, it encreaseth and hightens the sense of the words to the purpose, for which Eliha makes use of them. As if he had faid, Behold and see the Heavens, the upper Heavens, the Starry Heavens, they are higher than thou, yea, behold the Clouds which are neerest to us, and much, very much below the Starrs, those especially which Astronomers call the fixed Starrs; yet do but behold the Clouds, which at the top of some hills one may touch with his hand, (some describe great men hiding their heads among the Clouds) Behold, I fay, the Clouds which are lowest, yet they are higher than thou, they are beyond thy reach; much more the Heavens, most of all God, who is higher than the highest Heavens. Thou canst neither add to, nor diminish or blemish the beauty of the Heavens, thou canst not make a cloud better or worfe; What then canft thou do to or against the God of Heaven? To convince Job of this, is the purpose of Elibu in calling him to the view of the Heavens. Now foralmuch as Elibs invites Job to the view and Contemplation of the Heavens;

Note; First, It is our duty to fludy and meditate the natural works of God, or his works in Nature; Especially the Heavens, which are fo eminent a part of his works. The Scripture calls some, Starr-gazers, such are they, who

fludy the Heavens to a very evil purpole, drawing men off from their fole dependance upon God, by foretelling the events of things, and destinies of persons, from the positions and motions of the heavenly Bodies or Luminaries. This kind of Studying and Contemplating the Heavens, is one of the greatest vanities under Heaven, a vanity often reproved in the Scriptures of the holy Prophets; thus to be Starr-gazers, or Heaven-beholders is our fin: but there is a Contemplation of the Starrs which is our duty and commendation, (Pfal. 8. 3, 4.) When I confider (in that great volume of the works of God) the Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon and the Starrs which thou hast ordained; What is man that thou art mindfull of him, &c. David did both look and fee, he beheld the Heavens for a good purpose, a godly purpose, his own abasement, and the advancement of the glory and goodnels, or of the glorious goodnels of God, in spreading such a Canopy, sparkling with perpetual fires for him to walk under, and do his work by. And doubtless, did we with enlightned eyes behold and see the natural Heavens, we should become more spirit tual and heavenly.

Secondly, In that we have here three words, look, fee, and be-

hold. Note,

The works of God, Especially the Heavens, are diligently to be

We may look to the Heavens and not fee, we may fee the Heavens and not behold them. Let me here again mind the Reader of the Emphasis of that word; it notes a looking unto, or upon the Object, as a Hunter looks for a Hare, or a Fowler for a Bird; how doth he pry and look into every tuft and bush? So the word is used (Fer. 5.26.) Among my people are found wicked men : they lay waite (or they eye and behold) as one that setteth snares, they fet a trap, they catch men. All the visible works of God, much more the Heavens should be diligently considered, looke into feen, and beheld. It was a good Conclusion of one of the Ancients, who said, That man hath not looked unto Heaven, that hath only looked In calum non upon Heaven. A bare look is not sufficient, he must look with ad- suspect, qui camiration, or till he cannot forbeare to admire, as the first Latine sum tantum aword in that sentence signifies properly. A man may look upon a

Picure and the cannot forbeare to admire, as the first Latine sum tantum aspecific content of the cannot forbeare to admire, as the first Latine sum tantum aspecific content of the cannot forbeare to admire, as the first Latine sum tantum aspecific content of the cannot forbeare to admire, as the first Latine sum tantum aspecific content of the cannot forbeare to admire, as the first Latine sum tantum aspecific content of the cannot forbeare to admire and the cannot forbeare to admire a specific content of the cannot forbeare to a specific content of the cann Picture, and yet not behold it discerningly; he may say, that's the

picture

picture of a man, yet not confider the Art of the workman in drawing it; he may see it is the picture of a man, not of a beast, at a look, but he must see it exactly, if he would find out the worth and workmanship of it. A man in passage (as some speak) may see a house, yet not apprehend the Symmetry of the Plat-form, the skill of the A chiteet, nor the commodiousnesse of its Scituation; to discern these calls for serious confideration, and settled reviews. As in the Natural works of God, the Heavens made for man, so much more in his Spiritual works, the making of a Heaven in man, or man Heavenly, require our deepest thoughts, and most studious re-fearches. O how many are there who look transiently upon. those works of God, who never see not behold them, never enter into the fecrers of them! many know fome Truths, yet never looked into any, nor laboured to comprehend with all Saints for as all Saints ought to do) what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and keight of them; and therefore attain not to that rishes of the full affurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the myflery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, as the Apostle speaks (Col. 2. 2.) but are like children toffed to and fro, and carryed about with every wind of Doctrine, as the same Apostle describes them, Eth. 4.14. Remember, we are to look and see, and behold the Natural wo: ks of God, how much more the Spiritual Mysteries of the Gospel, and the works of grace ? these indeed are to be looked upon, and seen, and beheld, those other are not to be left unlooked upon.

Note, Thirdly,
The Heavens are a Divine Glasse, wherein we may see much of
God; they are a Natural Alphabet, the Letters whereof being well placed, and rightly put together, we may spell the name
of God, his Wisdome, Power, and Goodnesse.

Thus the Apostle argues (Rom: 1.19, 20.) That which may be known of God is manifest in them, or to them; that is, to the very Heathens. His proof for this, is taken from the poynt now proposed: For the invisible things of him from the Creation of the world are cleerly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and God-head. The Apostle layes it down in general, Whatsoever is made, whatsoever is part of the Creation, holds out somewhat of God: The very Clods of the

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Earth declare his Power; how much more the Clouds and Starrs of Heaven? Therefore Look to the Heavens, Behold the Clouds, consider them, (Pfal. 19. 2.) They declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy-work. If you ask more particularly, what do they declare? I answer, First, That God is; every Creature doth fo; if there be a Creature, there must needs be a Creator; If there be Etfects, there must be an Efficient; the made Heavens declare their Make. Secondly, The Heavens declare, not only that God is, but that he is above. Christ hath taught us to pray, Our Father, which art in Heaven; God is every where, yet there especially; Heaven is the Habitation of his Holinesse, and of his Glory. Thirdly, In the purity of the Heavens, we may see the holinesse and purity of God; and they being so incorruptible and unchangeable, declare Fourthly, The incorruptibility and unchangeablenesse of God: He that made them fuch, is much more fuch himself. The very unchangeablenesse of the Heavens, is changeable, compared with the unchangeablenesse of God. The Heavens (sauh David, Psal. 102. 25, 26.) are the work of thy hands; they shall perish, but then shalt endure (or stand), yea all of them shall wax old like a Garment: as a Vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. Fifthly, The Heavens which God hath built as a House for himself, being so high above the touch of the Creature, thew us that God is infinitely exalted above the reach and moleflation of finful man; that's the thing which Elihu aims at, as appears by what followeth in the next words. Look to the Heavens, and fee, behold the Clouds which are higher than thou.

Vers. 6. If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? or if thy transgressions be multiplyed, what dost thou unto him?

As if he had said, When thou lookest to the Heavens, thou plainty seest thou canst do nothing against them; it would be a vain thing for thee to attempt the Heavens, to clamber up to the Clouds; surely then, thy sinnings, thy frettings, thy discontents, and complaints cannot hurt God: therefore be quiet.

If thou sinnest.

The word here used, notes fin in the least degree, any error or RUM Erravie., deviation

deviation from the Rule; but it comprehends fins of the highest degree, even such as the Prophet calls (Amos 5.12.) Mighty fins. If thou sinnest at the greatest rate, at the height of blasphemy,

What dost thou against him?

Nontam -

The Hebren is, What workest thou against him? Properly the mocere, quam word fignifieth only to work; we render it by working against, operare et labo- that is, to the hurt and disadvan age of another, to his mitchief q. d. Laboran- and undoing. As if he had faid, If thou shouldest set thy shoulder do et adnitendo to the work, if thou shouldest do evil with both hands greedily, yet quid tandem of thou canst make no work of it in this matter, what dost thou against sicies quo illum him? what hurt hath he by it? And to assure Job that he hath none, nor can have any, Elihu ferves him up the same Mesle in another Dish of words, in the close of the verse.

Or if thy transgressions be multiplyed.

Here Elihu speaks as high, as he meant before. Transgressing is more than ordinary finning, though (as was coucht upon the word) under sinning he comprehended any, the most extraordinary transgressings. If thy fins be transgressions, rebellions, or prevarications, and they be multiplyed, if thou finnest out of malice and wrathful purpose against God himself; and dost not only commit some one of these, but many, and heapest them up together, yet de.

727 Et ad molem et numerum communi oft.

If thy transgressions be multiplyed. The word fignifies both magnitude and multitude; hence some render, If thy transgressions be great; we say, If they be many. Sin as much as thou wilt, and fin as often as thou wile; fin as much as thou canft, what hurt hath God by it? Some by fin in the former part of the verse, understand that evil which is committed immediately against God; and by transgressions in this latter clause, such evils as are done against our neighbour: But I fee no need at all to be so distinct, we may take it respecting God, or man, or both; for those fins which we commit against man, are also against God; he is the person offended, his Law is broken, against whomsoever the fin is committed. If thou mulsiply thy transgressions,

What doft thou unto him?

That word, What doft thou? fignifies not only, or not fo much, Arong strong labour and endeavour, as the former did, but cunning in labour, and skill in labour. As if he had faid, Though a man fet all his wits awork to do evil, what can he do to him ? Neither pains nor skill, neither industry nor policy, neither open force nor secret stratagems, can do him any the least annoyance. Some Creatures are weak and inconsiderable, as to any thing they can do by outward power, yet they can do much by their fubtilty, and cunning; but neither the one, nor the other can do any thing unto God. Scrue up thy wits to the highest pin, or peg, yet thou canst do nothing really prejudicial unto him. The words are plain; from them

Chap. 35.

Observe, First, God receives no dammage by the fin of man, how great, or how many soever his fins are.

A man may quickly vex and undo himself by fin. Wisdome faith (Prov. 8. 36.) He that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own foul: All they that hate me, love death. But the finner cannot hurt God, he is far above us; man can no more hurt God by fin, than he can hurt the Clouds, or the highest Heavens. Had wean enemy above the Clouds, were it not a madnelle to shoot arrows, or bend our forces against him? What is man to God! The School-man concludes, Nothing can be added to nothing can be di- Per assum homiminished, nothing taken from God by any act of man ! Yet man, as vi Deonihil minified, nothing taken from God by any act of man : I st man, as potest accresce-much as in him lyes, takes away from, and gives or brings to God, re vel deperiwhen he either keeps, or doth not keep that order which God hath re; Sed tamen appointed. Sinners shall be judged and dealt with, as they that home in quanhave greatly annoyed and disadvantaged God, as they that have tum in seeft, ahave greatly annoyed and diladvantaged God, as they that have liquid fubira-rob'd and spoyl'd him, as they that have smitten and wounded hit Deo, veloi him, as they that have abased him, and laid him low: And there exhibet, cum is reason they should be judged as having done so, forasmuch as servat vel they do their utmost to do so. Thus they are described (Pfal. 2. non servat ordi-1, 2.) The Heathen rage, and the People imagine a vain thing, nem quem De-The Kings of the Earth set themselves, and the Rulers, &c. And why Aquin. 1. all this? what was it for? It was against the Lord, and against his 2da. 9.21. Anointed. This was done by the Princes and Great Ones of the Art. 4. Ad world, yet they were fo far from being able to prejudice the Primum. Lord, either in his Person, or in his Interest, that he did but laugh at them for it. And 'tis confiderable that God is described there, (according

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(according to the notion used by Eliha in the Text) fitting in the Heavens, (verf. 4.) He that fitteth in the Heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision. And why doth the Lord laugh? furely because he sees they can no more hurt or hinder him in his purposes, by any of, or all their finful advisings, and attemptings, than if they should hope to batter down the Heavens by discharging a Por-gun against them. And therefore he concludes with a triumphane Tet, (ver.6.) Tet have I fet my King (after you have done your worst) upon my holy Hill of Sion. The fins of men do surn to the glory of God, but to their own fhame. The fins of Gods own children turn to the glory of his mercy; those huge heaps, and numberless numbers of fins committed by his Children before Conversion, what do they in the issue, but lift up the glory of his Grace in the pardon of them? And the rebellions committed by impenitent finners, going on in obstinacy to the end, wirhout Conversion, what do they but lift up the glory of God in his Justice, and wonderful judgements, which he will bring upon them? The fins of the old world (which was a world of fin, all flesh having corrupted their way before God, and there being but one righteous Family found in it) all those sins (I say) did not dammage God at all, but indeed they glorified both his Patience and his Justice; his Patience, in sparing them so long, even an hundred and twenty years after warning given; his Justice, in fending the Flood at last, which brought swift destruction upon them, and swept them all away. The unnatural crying fins of Sodome, did not hurt the God of Heaven, but God took advantage thereby, to glorifie his Justice, in raining Fire and Brimstone upon them from Heaven, (Gen. 19.24.) Pharaoh by all his opposition against the Israel of God, did not disadvantage God, but gave him an advantage to make his Power known, by swallowing up him and his Egyptian Host in the waters of the Red Sea. That which is done against the Will of God, fulfills the Will of God. The fins of men are fo far from hurting the God of Heaven, that they glorifie him among men on Earth; while they bahold him either turning the evil which is done into good, or punishing them for their evil doings. That which men speak or doagainst God, like an Arrow shot up into the Ayre, falls down upon their own heads. David (Pf. 111.2.) breaks out wonderfully into the praise of God upon this confideration. The works of the Lord are great, (ong bt

sought out of all them that have pleasure in them. These works of God wherein we should take pleasure, are not only works of mercy to the Godly, (vers. 3, 4, 5.) but of vengeance upon the wicked, (vers. 6.) He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the Heathen. The works of his hands are Verity and Judgement, (vers. 7.) That is, judgement for Saints in faving them, and upon finners in consuming them. De eo quoda-We should much contemplate the works of God, in bringing glory to himself out of the fins of men. The Angels finned and fell; Dei voluntaman finned as foon almost as he was fet up: These Creatures did tem, voluntas that which God would not have done, yet God brought about infin vel male that which he would. And thus it is to this day among all the children of men; while they break holy Commandements, God fulfills his holy Counsels; no thanks to them, yea woe to them. So then, the Lord hath no but by sin; which way soever sinners turn themselves, they cannot turn away his Counsels, nor turn from his Coursels: When they are disobeying his revealed will, Miro et ineffahe is doing his secret will, in which God is most righteous, and bili modo, non in his season will lift up his Righteousnesse and Holinesse, his fit prater ejus righteous and holy Will, in the face of all the finners in the world, quod etiam conand they shall know and confesse that he hath served his own wife traeju volunand holy purposes, even in those Providences wherein they have tatem fit; quit had no purpole, but to serve their foolish and unholy lusts and non sieres, se pleasures. We have an illustrious proof of this, in that extreamly non finerat: evil and unnatural practise of men good in the main, the holy Pa- finit sed volens. triarchs, against their own Brothe: (Gen. 50. 20) who told them Nec sineret boplainly, when he meant them no evil, but good, But as for you, nu fieri male, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it for good; to bring to pass, nist omnipotens as it is this day, to fare much people alive.

Further, To clear the Point in general, we may distinguish of bene. August. fin, as having a threefold opposition; First, Against our selves. in Psal. 111, Secondly, Against our Neighbour. Thirdly, Against God. This division or diffinction of fine, must be so understood that the two former, namely, fin against our selves, and against our Neighbour, brings a real detriment, and disadvantage to our selves, and to our Neighbour. But as sin hath respect to God, it doth not bring any real detriment to him: Only it may be faid, First, The will of many sinners is raised up to that height of wickednesse, as purposely to set themselves to dishonour God, to blaspheme his

in bonum convertenti vel mala punientis August, Enchirid, c. 100.

name, and do despight to the Spirit of Grace, (Heb. 10.29.) which is the utmost length that sin or lust can go. Secondly, The nature of every sin, or every sin considered in its nature, is a wrong or a hurt to God; for it is an unconformity to his Will, and a breach of his Law: Yet as to himself God receives no hurr, nor possibly can receive hurt by any, the soulest, most sinful sin.

But some may say, Doth not sin damage God at all; could Ellhusay in Truth, What dost them against him, or into him, if thou same of? Is sin nothing to God? The Church complained, and cryed out to those that passed by her, (Lam. 1. 12.) Is it nothing to you, all ye that passe by? Are all my afflictions nothing to you? May not God say much more, Are all your transgressions nothing unto me? Are our sins nothing to him? Is he unconcerned in them? How can this be? There are several Scripture-Expressions which shew cleerly that we do much against God when we sin, and much for him when we sin not, or abstain from sin.

First, When a People, especially when a professing People, sin, The name of God is prophaned; and is that nothing to God? Is it not against God, to have his name prophaned? We find the Lord charging this upon his People (Ezek. 36. 20, 21.) They prophaned my name among the Heathen, &c. To prophane the name of God, is to make it as an unholy, as a common, yea, as

a corrupt thing; and is this nothing to God?

Secondly, To fin is to dishonour God, 'tis called, A despising of God, (1 Sam. 2. 30.) Them that honour me, I will honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed. Is it nothing to be despised, to be dishonoured? If a man be despised, he thinks

himself wronged; losse of honour is a great losse.

Thirdly, We find in Scripture, that some kind of sinning is blaspheming. The Apostle tels the Jews (Rom. 2. 24.) The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, through you: That is, his name is evil spoken of, a bad report is brought upon his name, he hears ill among evil men, among the Gentiles, through you, that is, through the unanswerablenesse of your doings, to your sayings, or through the unlikenesse of your practises, to your profession. To blaspheme the name of God is to strike through, to wound the name of God; it is somewhat to a man to have his name struck through with the poysoned Arrows and Darts of reproach. An ill tongue falls heavy, and cuts deep. A blasphemed name is a tongue-

tongue-beaten name: And is this nothing to God?

Fourthly, Some fins are not only in themselves a contempt of God, but they are committed incontempt of God. When men sin presumptuously, and with a high hand; when they sin with a command thining in their eye, with a threat founding in their ear, they even fend a defiance to Heaven, and bid God do his world: And is this nothing against God? nothing unto God? One of the Ancients writing at large of two Cityes, calleth one of them, The earthly and unholy City, made by the love of our 1.14. De Ciselves, even to the loathing and contempt of God. (Love to our vitate Dei. felves, rifing up to the contempt of God, doth all the mischief cap. 28. in the world) The other City he calleth hely and heavenly, and that (laith he) is built by the love of God, or when we love God even to a loathing and contempt of our selves, and of all our own concernments, interests and advantages. When a man comes to love God with a loathing of himself, then he is indeed a builder of the holy City: And when sinners act with an inordinate love to themselves, they at once cast contempt upon God, and build that bad City; and is this nothing to God?

Fifthly, The Scripture faith, God is angry with fin. A wife man will not be angry with that which is nothing to him, or which doth nothing against him; a wife man will not be angry for no-

thing, much leffe will the only wife God.

Sixthly, The Scripture faith, God is grieved for the fins of men. Surely God will not be grieved for that which is nothing unto him. Himself (aich, sinners fret him, (Ezek. 16. 43.) Thou baft fretted me in all these things. A well tempered man will not fret for that which doth not some way or other afflict him. We read (1sa. 63. 10.) That Israel vexed his holy Spirit so much, that he was turned to be their enemy, and fought against them. And had they done nothing against him? Yea, it is said (Gen. 6.6) God was so much afflicted with the sins of the old world, that he repented that he had made man upon the Earth, and it grieved him at his heart. Doubtless that is somewhat to God, which grieves him thus, and goes to his very heart. And let us take heed of thinking fin is nothing to God; though Elibu faith here to Job, What dost thou unto him, if thou sinnest? Sin hath done all the mischief to man that ever was done him, nor can any thing do him a mischief, but his fin. And though God, as Elihu argueth truly, be a-F 2

above the reach of any mischief that sin or singers can do him, yet upon tryal they will be found guilty of, and cast for doing much,

and that very mitchievoully against God. And therefore
For answer to the Objection, know, The glory of God may
be considered two wayes; First, In it self. Secondly, In its manifestations: O:, we may consider God, First, In his Essential glory and blessednesse; Secondly, In his manifestative glory and blessedneffe. The Glory and Majeffy of God in it felf, or his Effential Glory is alwayes the same, and receives neither encrease nor diminution; for 'tis infinite and perfect, or infinitely perfect; and that's the definition of Perfection, or defined perfection, to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken. So then, Consider God in himself, and tis true, our sins are nothing to him, they hurt him no more than the Starres are hurt by throwing stones into the Ayre at them, or the Sun is hurt by casting Darts up at it, or the Moon is hurt by the barking of Dogs at it; we can no more hurt or hinder that good or glory of God by our fins, than Sun, Moon and Starres in Heaven, are hure or hindred in their Course, by such angry assaults from Earth.

Secondly, Consider the manifestations of the glory of God, and this is hindred, or damaged by fin. That's the meaning of all those Scriptures, where 'tis said, his name is prophaned, dishonoured, blasphemed; the present minisestations of his glory, which should break out every where, are clouded and eclipsed by fin. And this, their fins do especially who professe his name. Profesfors are oblieged where-ever they come, to hold out the sayour and excellency of his name: And therefore God will deal with knowing finners, as with those that hurt and wound him, as with those that have grieved and broken him, as with those who have burdened and troubled him, yea, as with those who would destroy him. Sin is an enemy to God, and would dethrone and catur Deicidi- thrust him out of the world; therefore finners shall be dealt with as fuch as have highly hurt and wronged God. Sinners have fometimes rifen up to such expressions of wickednesse, that they would even pull God out of Heaven; it is in the nature of every fin, and in the spirit of many finners to do so, they carry a dayly enmity in their hearts.

Peecatum voum appetens sc: Deum de-Pruere.

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Therefore wee to those who say of God, God is not hurt by our fins? why then should we trouble our selves about them? yes, the Lord will at last let all sinners know he hash been concerned in their fins; though they have not at all toucht his Essential Glory, yet they have darkned and sourr'd the manifestations of his Glory. And therefore I answer,

Secondly, All those Scriptures before alledged, importing that fin grieves God, vexes him, and is very burthensome to him; all those are spoken either of God-man, Jesus Christ, who was made like unto us in all things, except fin, and is spoken of in the Historyes and Prophesies of the Old Testament, before he Hacde Dee took flesh, as having those (in him) sinlesse passions of anger, and dicuntur asforrow, and grief, which were found in him after he appeared in es intelligenda the flesh : Or if expounded of God, strictly considered, then funt Storgewhat is in those Scriptures spoken of God, must be understood wis. after the manner of men, yet as becomes God, who is without all passions and repenings. Or they are to be understood, not as importing Affections in God, but Essets upon men. When men sin, God doth such things as angry men use to do, such things as men do that are grieved with what others have done, and repent of what themselves have done. If grief, anger, repentance, were properly wrought in God, when we fin, our fins must needs be some, yea much annoyance to him. But while man sees and feels fuch Effects as these passions produce, the Lord is infinitely exalted above the least feeling of these passions, he remains ever the same: That's it which Eliku signifieth, and holds out to Tob; we may trouble one another, and trouble our felves by fin, but we cannot at all trouble God. If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him, what unto him? I shall conclude, and gather up the sence of this Context in these four brief Deductions. Take two of them Negatively, and two Affirmatively.

First, God doth not punish sinners in anger, only, though he be

angry only with fin.

Secondly, God doth not punish sinners, at all, for fear. He fears sone, whom none can hurr.

The two Affirmatives take thus:

Fi st, When God punisheth sin, he doth it out of pure love to Justice, or purely out of love to Justice.

Secondly, God afflicts the godly in mercy; 'tis not because they have done him hurt, but for their good.

Etihu proceeds further to prove, that as Job could not hurt God by his fins, fo his righteousness and innocency were no advantage to him; and therefore it must needs follow, that his fins could only hurt, and his righteousness only profit himself, and such as were like himself.

Vers. 7. If thou be rightcous, what givest thou him? and what receiveth he at thy hands?

Vets. 8. Thy wickedness may hurt a man, as thou art; and thy righteousness may profit the son of man.

Elibu having shewed in the former verse, that the sin of man cannot detract any thing from, nor in the least hinder the happiness of God; proceeds in the 7th verse to shew, that the sinterness, yea that the righteousness of man cannot advantage, nor advance the happiness of God: And therefore lest he should seem to make both the sin and the righteousness of man to be of no use, he states the matter in the 8th verse, and tells us both to whom the wickedness of man is burtfull, and to whom the righteousness of man is prositable; Thy wickedness may hart a man as thou art, and thy righteousness may prosit the son of man; but neither can thy wickedness hurt, nor thy righteousness help or advantage God. That's the summe of these two verses.

Verl. 7. If thou be righteous, what givest thou him?

As if he had said; There is no reason (O fob) that thou shouldest at any time (as thou oftentimes hast) proclaim thy own righteous saif that added any thing to God. Fob was not ignorant of that; But the speech of Eliba had this scope in it, to reprove him for complaining that his goodness profited himself nothing, because though he was far from wickedness, yet he was afflicted, whereas many wicked men prospered and lived in full content; to which poynt his other friends had not answered. And surther, Elihu urgeth Job with this, because he had so industriously defended his own righteousness, as if he would intimate that God was a gainer by it; whereas if God at any time rewardeth our good deeds, that proceedeth from his own goodness and Free Grace, not from any obligation which we have pur upon him, by what we have done, how well soever we have done it. If thou be righteous, what givestthou him? This supposition, if thou be righteous, hath in it

a grant, if not an affirmation, that a man may be righteous; For though all men naturally, or in nature, are unrighteous, yet thorough grace all men, that is, all men who receive grace are righteous: And they who receive grace are righteous under a threefold notion. First, they are righteous by an imputed righteousness, or by the righteousness of another accounted to them; and thus every godly man is righteous, because freely justified. Secondly, they that have grace are righteous by an Inherent Righteousness, by a stock or a principle of Righteousness planted in them at their Conversion. In conversion, not only the acts, but the state and nature of a man is changed. He who before was nothing. but a bundle of unrighteousness, becomes a righteous man; that is, he hath a righteous principle planted in him and abiding with him. Thus a godly man is righteous, because he is sanctified. Thirdly, every man that hath grace, is a Righteous man by a righteousness flowing out from him, or by a practical righteousness; he is righteous by the doing of Righteousness; The former is Righteousness by Conversion, this is Righteousness by Conversation; and this flows from the former, as the Apostle John speaks in his first Epistle (Chap. 3. 5.) He that doth righteousness, is righteous; that is, he is in a righteons state through Justification, and hath righteousness planted in himthrough Sanctification; And he that is thus righteous in his state, is also a practiser of Righteousness in his way. As it is said of that worthy paire Zachary and Elizabeth, (Luke 1.6.) They were both Righteens, walking in all the Ordinances and Commandements of God blameless. Here was practical Righteousness, they were righteous workers, their course was a course of Righteousness, as themselves were in a state of Righteousness. And thus, I conceive, Elihu is chiefly to be understood here; because righteousness in this place is opposed to unrighteous actions. If thou wert Righteons; that is, if thy wayes or thy courses were as righteous, as thou half often? reported and afferted them to be (for Fob in the 27th Chap. faid, He would not let go his Righteousness, he would hold it till he dyed; he would never give up his Integrity, how much foever his friends accused him; he would no more give it up, than give it off, Now faith Elihu, If thou art righteom, as thou sayest, and standest so much upon it, let it be granted, seeing thou wilt needs have it so, that thou art righteom, The Septuagint render fo, Seeing thou art

Righteons, or for as much as thou art Righteons, that is, according to thy own affirmation, yea though God hath faid fo of thee, and born that witness of thee) yet what is that to God?

What givest thou unto him?

Julitia tua nirs,ne igitur tuam vendites 14stitism. Chry-

Donum eft rei licitæ nullo jufalla collatio. Hoslien.

If thy conversation were such as no blame could be laid upon bil deum juve- it; though no spot could be seen upon thy garments, after all thy walkings thorough the affaires of this world, yet what givest thou unto him? Surely nothing at all. Some conceive this was a famous proverbial Speech amongst the godly in those times, full of Reverence and high Estimation, or rather Admiration of God; If we are Righteons, what is it to God? or what give we to God? (What givest thou him?) The meaning is, thou givest him nothing. A gift is the bestowing of some good thing where there is no obligation; that's a gift which a man is not bound to bestow by any Law of re cogente me- Righteousness; A gift is bestowed out of meer liberality, or from a free and bountiful spirit. Now, saith he, What givest thou unto God? What fervice is there in all thy righteous wayes and works, which thou art not obliged to tender unto God, or which thou art not bound to do? Thy Righteousness doth not at all oblige God, for whatfoever good thou doest, thou art under a command to do it; there is a Law commanding, yea, compelling thee, if thou shouldest resuse; doest thou performe any duty to God or man, which thou art not bound or ingaged to perform? Surely thou doest nor, yea thou can'it not. Therefore, what givest thou unto God?

Or what receiveth he at thy hand?

The words are plain, giving and receiving are Correlatives; where there is giving, there is usually receiving; and where there is receiving, there must be giving. Sometimes there is giving, where there is no receiving. When Belteshazar promised Daniel great things, if he could Interpret the hand-writing on the wall, (Chap. 5.17.) He answered, Let thy gifts be to thy felf, and thy rewards unto another. Daniel would not receive his offer : There was giving inpro mise on Belteshazars side, but no receiving on Daniels side. Most are so much for receiving, that they love the word give, as the Propher taxed and reproved the Rulers of Ifrael, (Hof. 4.18.) Her Rulers with shame (that is, shamelessly, or of which they should be a hamed, or for which all cry shame on them')

them) do love, Give ye; that word founded well, even like sweet musick in their ears: And if others did not offer bribes to corrupt Justice, they invited them, give ye, we are ready to receive. The Apostle puts both these together in a good way, (Phil.4.15.) No Church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only: And he would have the Church at Ephefus to remember those words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more bleffed to give, than to receive, (Acts 20. 35.) Artaxerxes, one of Artaxerxes the Persian Monarchs, was Sirnamed, Long-hand; his right hand, longimonia or giving hand, being longer than the left; shewing, as some con- deutram majecture, that the Honour of Great Kings is seen more in giving num bebebat than in receiving. But as we have nothing of our own to give unto God, so he hath no need to receive any thing of us. Thus Eli-dave quam achu here, What givest thou him? or what receiveth he at thine hand? cipere.

Of thine hand.

He expresseth it not barely, What receiveth he of thee, but of thine hand; because as the hand is the great Instrument of working, so also of giving; we give and bestow with the hand, (what hath he received of thy hand), there is a speciallitie in that. Consider thy hand, what can the hand of God take out of thy hand? Thy hand is, First, a weak hand; Secondly, a narrow scanty hand; Thirdly, thy hand is an ineffectual hand to thy felf, it cannot bring any work about to the issue, to the full end and accomplishment; therefore what is thy hand, thy weak, thy narrow, thy ineffectual hand, that God should receive any thing out of thy hand? And then confider what the hand of God is; His is, First, a strong hand; Secondly, a large, a wide hand; Thirdly, a hand full already; and, Fourthly, as his hand is full already, so it is a hand filling all things; He openeth his hand, and fills all things with good. Now God having such a hand, how canst thou fill his hahd with thy hand? What receiveth he at thine hand? I need not fabour further in the explication of the words; Take one general Observation from them, which I shall draw down into some particulars.

The Righteensness or Righteons Actions of men, contribute nothing to God;

They are no advantage to God: The best things that we can do,

cannot at all better God, or God is never the better for them: That is the meaning of David, (Pal. 16 3.) speaking as a type of Christ; My goodness extendeth not to thee, but to the Saints which are on the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight. Ferome was of opinion, that these words of the Pialme were taken out of this place of Job. (My goodness) that is, my good deeds extend not to thee; the good deeds of Christ did not add any thing to God, they did not give any thing to God; for it is impossible that any good, or any goodness should so be made an addition to him, who is all, and hath all: but (faith he) to the Saints, to them my goodness extendeth, I can and will do good to them. Thus St Paul ipake to the Athenians, (Acts 17.25.) God is not worshipped with mens hands, as though he needed any thing : God calls for worthip, but he is not worthipped, because he needs our worship, or because he would receive some benefit at the hand of worthippers. The same Apostle puts the question, (Rom. 11. 35.) Who hath given unto him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? As much as to say, no man hath given any thing to God, he is above and beyond all the gifts, and givings of the creature.

There is a three-fold ground of it, why nothing can be given

to God, either to oblige him, or to add any thing to him.

First, All is due to him, what-ever we do is a debt to him; we cannot make the payment of a debt a gift. Be as holy and as righteous as you will, as exact in your walkings as you can, it is all of debt, and therefore not a gift. (Luke 17. 10.) When you have done all, (when you have run your whole Course of obedience, both as to first and second Table duties,) say you are unprofitable servants, we have done no more than was our duty to do.

There is no gift, where all is due.

Secondly, What-ever we do in a way of Righteousness, is not a gift, nor an advantage to God; for it was all first given us by God, we and all that we have came first from him; whatsoever we have, we have had it of God. It is said in that place before noted (Asts 17. 25.) He is not worshipped of mens hands, as if he needed any thing, (why?) for he giveth to all men life and breath, and all things; he gives all things, and therefore he needs nothing, nor can any thing properly be said to be given to him, who give hall things. We have that remarkable Scripture (1 Chron. 29.10.) where

Scirum est illud Sapientis Hebræi: da illi

Nihil accressit

ei nostra justi-

tia, quæ tota

gratuitum eft

illius donum.

where David praiseth the Lord for the offering and gift which de siw, quia tu he himself and his people had brought towards the building of the Temple; And he defired that his offerings might be accepted of ex this afferrithe Lord, not so much as they were given by his hand, as because mustibidomithey and the heart to give them, were received from the hand of ne. Drust God. Wherefore David blessed the Lord before all the Congregation, Etiamsi quod and said, Blessed be thou Lord God of Israelour Father, for ever and dere deo cupia-ever, for all that is in Heaven and in Earth is thine; thine is the mu, tamen de Kingdome, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. And, now fuo reddimus. sherefore, O God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious Name; But Salvi:de Eccl: who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so Cathol. willingly after this fort; for all things come of thee, and of thy own have we given thee. And again at the 16th verse; All this store cometh of thee, and all is thine own. We cannot be said properly to give another that which is his own already; whatever God receives of us, came from himself: And as whatsoever we give comes from God, so every action or duty which we performe to God, comes from God; he bestows the power to do upon us, before we can do any thing, and therefore it cannot be any addition unto him. There are two graces, which we exercise, very pleasing to God; first, Faith; secondly, Charity; yet neith er of these contribute any thing to God. Faith is so far from giving God any thing, that its whole work lyeth in receiving; And though charity be a giving grace, yet it gives to man only, not to God So then, what doth God receive of man? furely nothing but his own. David enquires (Pfal. 116.12.) What shall I return to the Lord for all his benefits? Mark that word, return; the Hebrew Text may be thus rendred; What shall I make to return to the Lord of all his rendrings, or contributions unto me; As if he had faid, Lord I have received abundance from thee, thou hast payd or recompenced me fully for all my paines, and I am looking over it all, and confidering what of it I shall return to thee; it is all thine own, and now Lord what shall I return of it back again to thee? What he received was returned, if not in kind, yet in effect, and the retuin of that was but his duty, it could not be his defert. Christ indeed merited and satisfied, because he gave of his own, and as God-man wrought all righteousness for us in his own strength. Thirdly, The Lord receives nothing at our hands, for he is full

already. We can put no more into a full vessel; if there be any G 2

non autem utilin. Plato in Euthyphra. quod nulla re en egebit. Aria. lib. 7: Eth. c. 12.

empty space, you may put somewhat more into a Vessel, but when it is as full as it can hold, what can you put into it? Who can make the Ocean fuller, which hath in it the fullness of all waters? All that we can give to God is not so much an encrease to him, as a drop of the Bucket is to the whole Ocean. Who can make the Sun-b. ighter? all we do to, or for God, is not fo much as a Candle to the Sun. What can he receive, who hath all things in himself? God is infinitely full, therefore there is no giving to him, nor receiving by him at our hands. That word which is one of the Titles. of God holds forth as much, he is Elshaddi, that is, A God every way full, every way sufficient, he is all-sufficient for us, and he is Est quidem pi- Self-sufficient. Some of the Heathens had such notions and glimeras illi gras, mering apprehensions of God. (Platosaith, The exercise of Godlinesse, or of Worship, is acceptable to God, but is not at all profitable to God. It is manifest, saith Aristotle, that God needs no Minifestum est friends, nor any thing to help him. The Sacrifices of the Jews were great and royal Offerings, they brought their Sheep, Dem, necami- and Oxen, and Bullocks, and Goats in abundance, yet the Lord would have them know he had no need of them, (Pfal. 50. 3.) I will not reprove thee for thy Sacrifices and burnt offerings to have been continually before me; I will take no Bullock out of thy house, nor he-Goat out of thy Folds, for every Beast of the Forrest is mine, and the Cattel upon a thousand Hills: I know all the Fowls of the Mountains, and the wild Beafts of the Field are mine. If I were an hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine, and the fulnesse thereof. Some conceive that Elihu aimes especially at those gif s. If thou bringest or givest many facrifices, what receiveth he at thy hand? The Lo-d doth not call for facrifices because he is hungry; that is, hath need of them. The Lord (Zeph. 2, 14.) threatens the gods of the Heathen, that he would starve or famish them; that is, 'he would destroy the means of their Worship: But who can familh the Lord, whose the world is, and the sulness

Now if God receives nothing at our hands by way of supply,

or addition, then

First, No Creature is necessary unto God. We all depend on him, he is altogether necessary to us, but we are not necessary to him; we are and ought to be his Servants, but he doth not need our service; we need such a Master, such a Lord, we need to

have such a one over us, but he needs not such as we are under him. Earthly Masters and Servants have need of one another; Masterskeep and maintain their Servants, and Servants are very helpful and profitable to their Masters. As a Servant needs a Master to give him meat and drink, aparrel, and the conveniences of this life; so the Master needs the Servant, he needs his work, his labour, his hand, he cannot tell how to do his businesse without him; Masters cannot live comfortably without their Servants, much leffe honourably, they cannot keep their State and Degree amongst men without Servants; and Servants need their Masters, they cannot subsist, they cannot live, but by wages, or the reward of their labour. God hath made such a tye, knit such a knot among the Creatures, that one, though a Superiour, should not despife the other, though much his Inferiour, for both concurre as parts, to the constitution of the whole, or general constitution of the world. But God is not a part, but the Principle, or Constituter of the Universe, not at all depending upon any part of it. If a Servant should have need of his Master, and not the Master of the Servant, the Master would despise his Servant; but God hath so ordered ir, that as the Servant needs the Master, so the Master needs the Servant, while himself hath no need of either. God hath no need of our service, but we need his service, or him as our Lord and Malter, It is an boneur to God that he hath so mamy to serve him, but it is his greatest honour that he needs none to ferve him. Before there were either men or Angels, God had the fame honour and happinesse that now he hath, he is self-sufficient; It were a shame and a dishonour to us, should we own him for God, who needed our good; he cannot be our God, who needs our good. All Creatures need the help and good of one another, and the help or good of all Creatures comes from God; but God himfelf is firong enough to help himself, and good enough to make himself everlastingly happy. There is nothing without him, but he can be happy without it; there's no Creature, whether thing or perfon, in Heaven or Earth, necessary to God, either as to his Being, or well-Being: And therefore we may fay, not only to the best man on Earth, but to the most glorious Angel in Heaven, (as Elihu to Job) What receiveth be of thine hand?

Secondly, If what we do, adds nothing to God, if he receive nothing by our most righteous services: then surely God shews wonderful

wonderful goodnesse towards us, in that he is pleased to make so great an account of, and fet such store by our services and righreousnesse, even of any, the least good we do in uprightnesse. Is it not a fingular comfort that the Lord puts so much worth upon what we do, though what we do be of no worth to him? and that God should bind himself to us, when he is not at all beholding to us? The Lord doth not say, What do you give me? or, What do I receive at your hands? thereby to put a flight upon our performances and services; 'tis far from the Lord, that because he hath no need of us, therefore to contemn us; no, he declares a great acceptance of any, the least faithfull service to himself, or to our brethren, which we do at his command. Though, should we ffretch our endeavours, and ffrain our wits to the utmost, to do him good we cannot, yet he doth not undervalue what we do. but takes what is well done, well at our hands, and puts all our good deeds into his Book of Remembrance, and we shall one way

Thirdly, We may inferre, How good is God, who highly rewards are for the good we do, though it do him no good! Man will scarce thank a man for any good that he doth, unlesse it redound somewhat to himself, much lesse will he pay or reward another for that service which stands him in little, or no stead. If man make a bargain with a man, he comes hardly off with him, if he gets no benefit by it: seeing then the Lord rewards us for those services by which he gets no good at all, how wonderfully doth this de-

clare his goodnesse!

Fourthly, How doth the goodnesse of God appear; seeing though we can adde nothing to his glory, yet if we do good and righteous things, he tells us that we gloriste him, which is the highest commendation imaginable of what we do. Tis the Command of Christ (Mat. 5. 16.) Let your light so shine before men, that they seeing your good works, may gloriste your Father which is in Heaven. The Apostles Caution is, what soever ye do, do all to the glory of God, 1 Cor. 10. 31. Now though (according to this and the other charge) we, in all we do, sincerely aime at the holding forth and manifesting of that glory and goodness that is in God, yet he receives no encrease of glory; is it not therefore wonderful goodnesse, that he is pleased to say, we gloriste him? (which is the highest attainment of the Creature, and the noblest improve-

improvement of our pains and labours. These and many other inferences, may be made for our influction, from this humbling question, If thou be righteous, what givest thou to him, or what recei-

weth he at thy hands?

Elibu having told Fob that neither his fin did hurt God, nor his righteousnesse advantage him, lest any should thence inferre, surely then it is no great matter whether we be righteous or wicked, whether we do good or evil; to prevent this mischief, he shews that though your fin cannot hurt God, yet it will do hurt enough, and though our righteousness adde no good to God, yet it may do much good. This he doth in the next verse.

Vets. 8. Thy wickednesse may hurt a man as thon art, and thy right eousnesse may profit the son of man.

As if he had said, I will tell thee what will become of the good and evill thou dest, as to advantage or disadvantage; for asmuch as thou canst not advantage God by thy right cousnesse, nor hurt him by thy Sibona ogeriwickednesse, it must needs follow, that the one may be helpfull, and mus, nostro bothe other hurtfall to thy felf, and to such as thou thy felf art : If it no; simala, were otherwise, or not so, there would be no difference between the nostro malo. doing of good or evil, as to the Event, how greatly soever they differ in their Nature.

Thy wickednesse may hurt a man as thou art, only it cannot hurt God. God is as great and as happy as ever he was, and he will ever be as great and as happy as now he is, let men do their worst, and be as wicked as they can.

Thy wickedne Te, &c.

The word wickednesse notes fin in the highest degree, at least of a high degree; every wickednesse is sin, but every sin is not wickednesse; yet we are not to understand Elihu's meaning, as if great fins only did mischief and hurt. The truth is, every fin doth hurt and mischief; as a little poyson, and the least poyson may do hurt, unless it be corrected. We use to say of some things, A little doth not hurt; but we cannot say a little poyson doth no Modicum nonhurt, unlesse jou do not takeit, or unlesse it be corrected; a little noiet. poylon uncorrected will do hurt. So then, when Eliha faith here, Thy wickednesse may hurt, we are not to understand it only of great fins, as whoredome, murder, perjury, drunkenness, and witchcraft,

witchcraft, &c. but even of idle thoughts, of vain words, or undue passions; these hurt as well as greater sins, commonly called wickednesse. Thy wickedness

May hurt a man as thon art.

These words (may hurt) are not expressed in the Original Text, but they are plainly intended and implyed: Yet if we should leave them out of the reading, the sence would be the same (Thy wickedness is to hurt a man as thou art) That is, thy wickednesses to the hurt or damage of a man as thou art; it may hurt thee or thy brother, it may hurt thy self, or any like thy self.

Hence Note, First, That sin is a hurtfull thing.

Wheresoever sin is, it doth mischief. Sin is so bad in the nature of it, that we have reason enough to avoid it and flye from it, and fin is so dangerous in the Effects of it, that we have further, though not more reason to avoid it, and flye from it; indeed we shouldrather (and that is our spiritualnesse in avoiding of sin) avoid it because of the evil that is in the Nature of it, because it riseth up against the Will, and breaks the holy Commands of God; we have greatest reason to depart from sin, because it is a departure from God, because of the blacknesse and filthinesse of it; yet not onely the blacknesse of this Coal, but the fire, the eternal fire that is in it, gives us cause enough to depart from it. Tistrue, a truly gracious heart would not fin, though he might escape all the sad effects of sin, but when he hears it is as hot as fire, and as deadly as poyson, and as killing as the plague; when he hears that it is the ruine of Persons, and of Families, of Churches and Nations, when he hears that 'tis fin which hath done all the hurt and mischief that ever was in the world, he sees he hath further reason to dread it, and depart from it.

Again (Thy wickedness may hurt a man.)

Note; Sindoth mischief to man, and to man especially.

Sin dothmischief all the world over; the whole Creation groans under the mischief and vanity, which sin hath brought upon it, (Rom. 8.22.) Sin hath done damage to the whole Creation; but the great

great damage which fin doth, is to man, to him that acts it to others before whom it is acted, or towards wt om it is acted. Sin is diffributed into two forts, as to its hurtfulnelle. Sin either respects our selves in the hurt it doth, or others, and those others are either God or our Neighbour; fin hurrs our selves most, yet fin as it is a wrong to God, may be faid to hurt his honour, and diminish the manifestation of his glory in the world, (as hath been thewed before). And fin is really a wrong to our Neighbour. There are a number of fins committed against our selves, yea, every fin, though committed against our Neighbour, hits and hurts our selves; no man can hurt his Neighbour, but he hurts himself most. So that, although there are many sins which respect others, yet all are against our selves. Some sins (unbelief especially, and the neglect of holy duties) hurt our felves only; there are fins which more properly hurt others, as oppression and uncharitablenesse; there are several sins which at once hurt others and our selves. Adultery hurts felf and others too; evil words hurt our felves and others too, as the Apostle tells us out of a Poet, (1 Cor. 15. 33.) Evil communication corrupteth good manners; that is, you corrupt the good manners of others, you debauch others by unfavoury speeches; our ill example hurts our selves and others. Our Neighbour is hurt by our fin. First, By any thing that is a wrong to him, as to his Estate, or as to his Person, or as to his Credit Secondly, By the scandal of it, when we do that which is evil, it hardens the wicked, and makes them go on more securely in their sin, and keeps them off from the waves of God; it endangers good men also, and discourageth them in the duties they owe both to God and man in the profession of the Gospel. Thus sin may hurt our selves and our Neighbours.

Thy wickedness may burt a man as thou art.

But why faith he aman as thou ant? What, a man just of thy Complexion, or just of thy height, statute, and pirch? what, a man of thy State and Degree, a man just of thy eminency in the world? certainly no; but when he saith, A man as thou art, his meaning is, any man, because all men are in many things alike, they are all mortal, and sinful, and weak, and apt to receive hurt by the sins of others. Thus every man is a man as thou art.

Hence note All men are alike.

Though the faces of men are very different, and we know one man from another, because they are unlike in face, yet as to their constitution and natural condition, they are alike; he that is greatest, is such a man as the least; and the strongest is such a man as the weakest, the richest as the poorest, the learnedest as the most ignorant, and the godliest man is as the wickedest man, as to his natural composition. All men are alike in these source things: First, all men need that which is good. Secondly, all men are tenfible of that which is hurtful and afflictive to them. Thirdly, all men are apt to take hurt, and to run into danger by the fin and ill Examples of others, or to receive good by their good deeds, and profitable examples, all men being affociated in the same common nature, and familiar each to other. Fourthly, all men are alike in this, that they are not self-sufficient, but stand in need of the help of one another; He that is helpful to a man like himself, helpeth himself, and doth acknowledge that (considering humane frailty) he may have occasion to call for and defire the help of another; and therefore (fay fome) man hath two hands, two armes, that he may understand himself born as much to need and receive help, as to give it. Thus every man is a man as thou art; and upon these and many other Considerations thou mayest hurt a man as thou art. There is an excellent paradox, handled by some of the M-mo potest ab Ancients; No man is hurt, but by himself; for unless a mans soul be hurt, he is not hurt; which is much confirmed by, and appeareth clearly in the example of Job. For the devil planted all those engines, and made all those affaults upon and against him, not because he had a design to make him poor, childless, and diseased, (all which, he knew, could not hurt him) but to make him impatient, and to extort one evil and blasphemous word against God from him. But though it be true, that no man is hurt but by himfelf, yet it is true also, that the fin of one man may hurt another. Oppression hurts other men, (as to civils) whether they will or no; but no fin can hurt another (as to morals) unless he will; no man is infected by vice, if himself refuse, and be against it; yea the oppressions and afflictions which other men thrust violently upon us, cannot hurt us, unless we by our impatience under them bring hurc

elio lædi nifi a jeipso,nist enim quis la daturanimo, non laditur.

hurt to our selves. The cruel usage of Tyrants, did not hurt the Martyrs; when they burnt them, and imprisoned them, and hanged them, they did not hurt them, because they were patient under those oppressions, and took their sufferings for Christs sake with joyfulness. What hurt did the poverty and ulcers of Lazarus do him? What hurt had Abel by that inhumane cruelty of his brother Cain? What hurt had Panl by all his sufferings? What any of the Saints, by imprisonment, or banishment, by being sawne afunder, or flain with the fword? properly no hurt at all. It is out of the power and reach of wicked persecutors to hurt the Witnesses of Christ, though they have power to flay them. Steven was not hurt when he was stoned, because he freely gave up himself. In a word, take it thus; First, no man is hurt by the sin of another, but as himself is pleased with, or practiseth the same sin; Secondly, no man is hurt by the temptations of the devil, but as he consents and yeilds to them; Thirdly, no man is hurt by the oppositions and perfecutions of others, but as he is impatient under them. Thy wickedness may burt a man as thou art,

And thy Righteousness may profit the son of man.

That is, thy righteous actions or deeds, may profit the fon of man; that is, thy felf, or any man, good or bad. Those words, may profit, are not expressed, but are clearly implyed in the sense of the Text. Righteousness tends to every mans benefit, it may help and profit thy self, it may be helpfull or profitable to those who are about thee, or with whom thou hast to do.

Hence note.

First, Righteousness, or righteous actions, have profit in them.

Wickedness turns to mans hurt of it self, but Righteousness doth profit. Although there be a vast and wide difference between mans righteousness and unrighteousness; this latter of it self deserving all manner of evil; and the former, because imperfect at the best, deserving no good at all; yet through the bounty and benignity of God it comes to pass, that the smallest (if sincere) endeavour after righteousness shall profit a man as much as his greatest unrighteousness can hurt or damage him. For God who doth not reward us according to our iniquities, (Psal. 103. 10.) will most amply reward us according to our righteousness. The

Apostle gave command, Exercise thy self unto godliness, (follow that trade well; why?) for godliness is profitable unto all things, (1 Tim. 4. 8.) it profits by vertue of the promise, and it hath the promise of this life as well as of that which is to come. (Titus 3. 8. This is a faithfull faying, and this I will that thou constantly affirme, that they which have believed in God, might be carefull to maintain good works, (why? for) thefe things are good and profitable unto men. Some expound these words, good and profitable unto men, chiefly of doctrine; To reach men to follow works, that indeed is good and profitable doctrine; now if it be a good and profitable doctrine to press men to good works, to works of Righteousness, then Righteousness it self, and good works, must needs be profitable. There is such an excellency in the nature of Righteousness, it is such an honourable, amiable, and beautifull thing in its own nature, that it is enough to draw us to the doing of it (as some have said of Vertue in general, If vertue could be feen, it would draw all to the admiration of it; so I say of Righteousness in special, If it sould be seen, it would draw all eyes and hearts after it) But besides that, here is an excellent Loadstone, here is profit, thy Righteousness may profit another; profit draws much, it draws on all men in the world; where there is any profit and benefit to be had, how do men strive to trade there, as if Heaven were to be had there? now Righteousness is profitable; the exercise of Righteousness is no poor trade, there is a great deale of advantage in it; and I might shew you how every work, good for the matter, done in a right manner, and for right ends, is profitable to others, and to cur felves. To speak a good word, may be a means to minister grace unto the hearers; and to do a good work, of any fort, ministers a gracious example to the beholders: by doing good, you may draw others to do good; to fee one walking in wayes of righteousness, invites and allures others into wayes of righteousness; as bad examples corrupt so good examples instruct; as bad examples build up for hell, so good examples build up for heaven; To be built or helpt on heaven-ward, is the best profit in the world, greater profit than the gain of the whole world. And as every good work ministers a good example to the beholders, so works of Charity minister comfort and relief to the receivers, as also an occasion of bleffing God for their benefactors; yea works of Charity to others are profitable also

to our felves, for there is a promise of reward to those who minifter the least charities to such as deserve the greatest charity, though usually they find the least, (Math. 10. 42.) Who foever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only (and how cold is their charity who will not give that!) in the name of a disciple, shall in no wise lose his reward; that is, he shall furely have it. Thus we see how profit and advantage, even great profit and advantage comes by Righteousness; yet take heed of thinking that your Righteoufness deserves any the least profit at the hand of God. Though we press you to Righteousness as profitable, yet it becomes you to say, we are unprofitable servants, and therefore cannot challenge any profit as our due, how righteous soever we are. It doth not at all follow, because we affirme Righteousness will profit us, that therefore Righteousness can justifie us, or that, because it is profitable to us, therefore it can fave us. All our righteousnesses are but as a filthy garment, faith the Prophet, and therefore unprofitable for this thing. The Apostle counted all things loss (not gain) dung (not profit) that he might win Christ, and be found in hime, not having his own Righteousness, (Phil. 3.8, 9.) Righteousness is profitable, if you keep it in its proper place, and apply it to its proper use; it is profitable to what God hath appointed it; he helps us to work Righteousness, and then rewards us for our righteous working : God is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love, (Heb. 6. 10.) Let us be found in our duty, and then in due time and place we shall find our profit. Our experience will reach us at last, that while we have been doing good to others, we have done good to our selves; Righteousness is profitable unto all things, and to all men, as well to those who do it, as to those for whom is is done.

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JOB, Chap. 35. Vers. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

9. By reason of the multitude of oppressions they make the oppressed to cry: they cry out by reason of the arme of the mighty.

10. But none faith, Where is God my maker, who

giveth Songs in the night?

11. Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wifer than the fowles of heaven.

12. There they cry (but none giveth answer) because of the pride of evil men.

13. Surely God will not bear vanity, neither will

the Almighty regard it.

Have dispatched the first of those great Objections which Elibu made afresh against Fob in this Chapter, his speaking unduly of God. This context contains a second, with the answer to it.

The Connection is given by some thus; Whereas Elibu told Job at the 8th verse, That his wickedness might hart a man like himself; He here proves, that the wickedness of man is very hurtfull to men, so hurtfull, that by reason of the multitude of oppressions they make the oppressed to cry: They cry out by reason of the armse of the mighty. Yet I shall not prosecute the words in that dependance, but as they are matter of a second complaint or charge brought by Elihu against Job. The charge is laid down in the 9th verse, and his answer is prosecuted in the 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th verses.

Vers. 9. By reason of the multisude of oppressions they make the oppressed to cry.

This offended Job; the poor cryed, and they had no helper, no deliverer. We may conceive, that Elibu gathered up this complaint from the words of Job, (Chap. 24.12.) Men groan from out of the City, and the foul of the wounded cryeth out, yet God layeth not folly to them: As if he had said, The Lord lightly passeth by,

by, and takes little notice of the greatest afflictions, the oppressi-

Chap. 35.

ons of the poor, though righteous men. Elihu grants these general truths; First, that many are oppressed; Secondly, that many cry out in their oppressions; Thirdly, that many remain undeliveeed from, and unreliered in their oppressions. God sometimes seemeth not to regard the groans and cryes of the afflicted, nor doth he alwayss prefently take vengeance of oppressors according to their folly. Elibu grants all this, he grants that many poor men are fo mightily oppressed by the mighty, that they are forced to cry mightily; yet he strongly acquies God from any such impuration, as those words of Job seem to admit or infinuate. And in the prosecution of his anfwer (as will appear in opening the 10th and 11th verfes) he sheweth, that the reason why the oppressed are not delivered, or answered when they cry, is in themselves, and not in God, (and he would have Job confider, whether he were not of that number) they cry (faith Elihu) but they do not cry with such a frame of heart, with such a disposition of spirit, as they ought; they cry as men pressed rather with the weight of their own sufferings, than toucht with any sense of their fins, or reverence of the soveraignty of God, giving them up to the power of oppressors; or as having any faith in him for their deliverance, or quiet submission to him, who is ready to help all those who religiously fly to him for refuge, and is able to bring them out of their darkest and most deplorable condition. These may be said either not to pray at all, or they pray not with such holy aims and designs, with such integrity and uprightness of heart, as becometh the people of God: They pray under the power of impatience, or moved with envy. at the power of their adversaries, or with a defire of utmost revenge, which nothing stops them from, but their own want of power, or because they cannot; and therefore God takes no notice of their prayers, (v. 12, 13.) There they cry, but none giveth answer; Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regardit. That's the summe and scope of the Context. I shall now open the words in order.

Vers. 9. By reason of the multitude of oppressions, they make the oppressed to cry.

Here are oppressions, and a multitude of oppressions. The word signifieth

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fignifieth magnitude as well as multitude, the muchness as well as the manyness (if I may so speak) of the oppressions which were upon them. Any one great oppression will make men cry, how much more many great ones? We render it as a word of number. By reason of the multitude

Of opprefficers.

עשק fecit, quavi inquria affecit.

The Original notes oppression of all forts: First, oppression up-Oppressir, vim on the credit and good name of another, by flander and false acculation; So the Septuagint render it, By reason of calumnies, or unrighteous charges, or Sycophantismes, (that's the word in the Greek Translation) they cry. False accusers undermine others, and bring them into danger by burdening them with lyes. Secondly, it notes usually oppression upon a mans estate, (Sam. 12. 4. Isa. 33. 15. Ezek. 18. 7. Mal. 3. 5.) Thirdly, upon his per-ion, (Isa. 52. 4.) Now when a man is oppressed all over, when his credit or good name is oppressed by calumniation, his estate by wrongfull seisure, and his person by violent restraint, here's a troop, a multitude of oppressions. By reason of the multitude of appressions

They make the oppressed to cry.

That is, the oppressed do not only complain a little, but are forced to open lamentations; the load upon them is so heavy, that they cannot contain, they cry; yea as the next clause hath it, they cry out, as a woman in travel, when her paines come upon her.

They make the oppressed to cry.

They make them cry upon a double Confideration; First, because of the misery which they feel, and are burdened with; Secondly, for the mercy which they defire, expect, and think long a-coming; men cry for ease, for help, for assistance, for deliverance: we may suppose the oppressed ones in the Text crying in all these respects; the burden was so heavy upon them, that it made them cry out for the very weight of it, and they cryed and called for some charitable, or tender heart, to come and case them of it, and deliver them from it. Elihu doth not rest in speaking this once, but repeats it again; By reason of the multirude of oppressions they make the oppressed to cry.

They cry out by reason of the arme of the mighty.

These words poynt us expresly to the cause of their cry, or outcry; it was the arme of the mighty; which may be taken either properly, or figuratively. Properly, the Arme is a well known and most usefull member of the body: And because there is a great deal of Arength and power in the arme, therefore by a figure, the arme signifieth strength, might, of power; and to say, they cry out by reason of the arme of the mighty, is as much as to say, they cry out by reason of the power of the mighty. The arme is Severissimum frequently in Scripture put for power; the powerful wrath of od dei Supplicium is called the arme of God. The Prophet (Ifa. 30. 30.) speaks of immilione aut the lighting down of his arme. When the Lord lets his arme fall, chi significaor light down upon a man, a family, or a Nation, in wrath, it crush- tur. eth either or all of them to pieces. And as the powerful wrath, so the powerful grace of God is called bis arme, (Isa. 53. 1.) Who hath believed our report? to whom is the arme of the Lord revealed? That is, his mighty power, working by and manifesting it self in Christ, and in the ministery of the Gospel, for the conviction, conversion, and salvation of sinners. Thus also the arme of man, is the power of man, (Dan. 11.6.) She shall not retain the power of the arme; neither shall be stand, nor bis arme: That is, his power shall fall, or both he and she (Bernire and Antiochus Theus) shall fall and be powerless. (Pfal. 37.16.) The arme of the wicked (that is, their power) shall be broken, but the Lord upholdeth the righteous. They cry out by reason of the armse

Of the mighty.

The same word which in the first part of the verse is translated multitude, is here translated, The mighty. But what was the mightiness of these men? There is a four-fold mightiness, First, there is mightiness of body, that is natural might, and 'tis properly the might of the arme. Secondly, there is a mightiness in valour and in Armes: Thus fouldiers and warriers are mighty men; they who having courage in their hearts, have also weapons in their hands, and swords by their sides, are the mighty. Such a one was Gideon, to whom the Angel said, (Judg. 6. 12.) The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. Thirdly, there is a migh-

tiness of Authority: And thus the Magistrate is a mighty man; suppose he be weak in body, yet he is mighty in power, and can do great things. Fourthly, there is a mightiness of wealth and riches: Thus Boaz is called a mighty man of wealth, (Ruth 2. 1.) Riches have so much might in them, that in the Hebrew one word serves to signific both might and riches. We may understand the mighty man here in any or all these four senses. The oppressed cryout by reason of the arms of the mighty. They who have much bodily strength, often oppress the weaker, and so do the mighty in Armes, and so do the mighty in Authority, and so the mighty in riches have often done, making the poor and the oppressed cry; They cryout by reason of the arms of the mighty.

From the former part of the verse; Observe.

Oppression is a common sin.

Not only was Babylon stained with it, but Jerusalem. That's an amazing passage (fer. 6. 6.) Thus hath the Lord of hosts said; hew ye down trees, and cast a Mount against Jerusalem. This is the City to be visited, she is wholly oppression in the midst of her. Not only was Ferusalem a City, but, The City, a City above all Cities, to be vifited by an oppressing enemy; and why? even because she not only had oppressors in her, but was oppression. O how oppresfive was that City, which was oppression, and that not only in some parts of her, but wholly, and that not in her skires and suburbs, but in the midst of her! The Lord, to shew that the Jewes were superlatively rebellious, or most rebellious against him, calleth them (in the abstract) rebellion, as the Margin hath it, (Ezek. 2.7.) and to shew how superlatively oppressive they were one against another, He calls Ferufalem oppression. Here in the Text we have a multitude of oppressions, surely then, there were a multitude of oppressors. To heare of a multitude of fins of all sorts, is very sad, but when there is multitude of one fort, and that one of the worst fort, and such a sin as cannot go alone, but draws after it a heap of almost all forts of sin: what a multitude of sins are there! It cannot be denied, but that oppression is a very common epidemical fin, if we take and confider it in the full latitude of it. For there is a two-fold oppression. First, there is a secret oppression. To deceive, defraud, or go beyond another, in the Aposties sense, is to oppress him. And thus' tis said, (Hof. 12.7.) He is a Merchant,

the balances of deceit are in his hand, he lovel he oppress. He doth not oppress by violence, with a sword in his hand, but by crast with balances in his hand; he oppressent while he over-reacheth in dealing and trading. This fort of oppression runs up and down every where; and though this kind of oppression make not a great cry, yet it is a great sin, a crying sin. There is also a secret oppression under colour of Law; many turn the very Rules of Justice into rods of oppression: And this is by so much the worse, by how much it hath the better cover. Secondly, there is an open oppression, the Nimrods of the world, the mighty Hunters tare and vex and trouble all they can, and would make all tremble before them, or run from them, as the Hare and Hart from their merry, but merciless pursuers. Now if both secret and open oppressions are so commonly practised, oppression may justly beare the title of a common sin.

Secondly, Note.

Oppression is a very crying sin.

That cannot but be a crying sin, which makes so many cry. Oppression then is a crying sin. First, as to the nature of it: Secondly, as to the effect of it. Oppression cryeth, and it makes those cry who are oppressed. Solomon saith, (Eccles. 7. 7.) Oppression maketh a wife man mad. That which puts a man even out of his wits, or besides the right use of his reason, will put him much to the use of his tongue, causing him to complain, cry out, and clamour. But who are they that are most given to, and deepest drencht in this sin of oppression? The Text answers, They cry out by reason of the arme of the mighty.

Hence note, Thirdly.

Power is commonly abused to oppression.

We read indeed of a poor man oppressing the poor, (Pro. 28. 3.) And Solomon tells us, that such a mans oppression is the soarest oppression; for he compares it (in the same verse) to a sweeping raine, which leaveth no food. They who have nothing, will take all when they can come by it, and get it. If all men in power should, be as hard to their inferiors, as some are who have little or no power, there were no living in the world. Necessity may drive the poor to be more oppressive, than Ability draws the

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Verf. 9.

their power, for shedding blood; yea many defire to get power into their hand, that they may avenge themselves by their own hand, and be ready to hurt whom and where they do not love. 'Tis not so much ambition which provokes some men to affect Paratieres ad power and greatness, as malice and a defire of having their ends nocendum. upon whomsoever stands in their way. These like the great Fishes of the Sea, delight to swallow up and feed upon the leffer; or like the great and strong Beasts of the Forrest, they tare and devoure the Lambs or Sheep of the pasture. They use (that is, indeed abuse) their power, not so much for their own good, as in wronging their neighbours, whose hurt they should never seek, and whose good they ought to seek and promote next their own, Power should be used and put forth, for help, not hurt, for prorection, not ruine; and therefore Magistrates, who are the chief mighty men of the earth, who are called Powers, (Tit. 3. 1.) are also called the Sheilds of the earth; implying, they are to use their power for the defence (a Sheild is for defence) of the oppressed, not to oppress. The Scripture calls Magistrates Sheildis but it never ealls the Magistrate a Sword. It saith indeed the Magistrate hath a smord, and that he beareth not the sword in vaine, (Rom. 13.4.) that is, he doth not bear it so as to bear with evil doers, and never draw it, nor use it. But the Scripture doth not say, the Magistrate is a Sword, as it saith, he is a Shield; hereby intimating, that the Power of the Magistrate should rather be exercised in protecting than in punishing, rather in saving than destroying. What the Apostle saith concerning the designe or purpose of his ministerial office, We have this power to edification, and not to destruction, (2 Cor. 13. 10.) is true of all power; the primary designe of it is for protection, rather than for destruction, and not at all for oppression or vexation. Magistrates have Swords, but they are Shields, not Swords; they have a Sword to cut off evil doers, and by that the good are preserved and defended. Such mighty ones, who delight to be Swords, but care not to be Shields, who are all for cutting and destroying, not at all for faving, relieving, and protecting, (fuch mighry ones, I fay) caused the oppressed to cry, yea to cry out in Jobs time; and in what times foever they are, they make the oppressed cry out. And the matter, that Elihu supposed Job was offended at; was, that God did not hear the cry of these oppressed ones, nor ap-

pear for their deliverance; which yet he hath declared himself ready to, as David afterward describeth him, (Psa. 12.5.) For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise (sauth the Lord) I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him. But Job hearing this cry of the oppressed, or crying out of his own oppression, and God seeming not to regard it, was stumbled at the matter. To remove this, Elihu answers in the next werse.

Vers. 10. But none faith, Where is God my maker, who giveth fongs in the night?

There is a two-fold Exposition of these words, arising from a doubt about the Antecedent to none, or who is meant by those

that say not, where is God my maker? Who are those?

The first Interpretation gives it to the oppressors, to the mighty men before spoken of; They make the oppressed to cry by reason of the multitude of oppressions; but none of these mighty oppressors say, Where is God my maker, that giveth songs in the night? Thus the verse is translated quite through, with respect to wicked oppressors, who cast God out of their thoughts, never saying, Where is God my maker, who hath set me up, who hath given me this power, and given me songs, (that is, occasions of joy) in the night? The wicked have abundance, they can feast it and sing it day and night, yet mind not God the sountain and bestower of all. This is a truth in it self; and because the interpretation is insisted upon by some as the truth intended in the present Text,

Take this Note from it.

Oppressors put away the thoughts of God, or mind not God, when they do, or are about to do, mischief.

They make the oppressed cry, but they say not, Where is God? They neither speak nor think of God, who hath cloathed them with power, and made their arme mighty. We finde this frame frequently ascribed in Scripture to oppressors; Elihu chargeth Job with it, (Chap. 22d) where having told him to his sace, of many acts of oppression; Thou hast stripped the naked of their clothing, (v. 6.) Thou hast mithhelden bread from the hungry, (v. 7.) And the armes of the fatherless have been broken, (v. 9.) Having (I say) reckoned up these his supposed oppressions, he concludes,

cludes, (v. 13.) And thou sayes, How doth God know? can be judge through the dark Cloud? David in prayer, speaks the same of his oppressors, (Psal. 86. 14.) O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of violent men have sought after my soul, and have not set thee before them. (Psal. 94. 3, 6.) They break in pieces O Lord thy people, and assist thine heritage; They slay the midow, and the stranger, and murder the satherles: Yet they say, the Lord doth not see it, neither shall the God of facob regard it. All these Scriptures may be resolved into the Text; They say not, Where is God my maker? They who do all they can to unmake and undotheir sellow-creatures, care not to remember him, who is the maker and creator of us all. But

Secondly, I conceive, those words, None saith, Where is God my maker? are rather to be referred to the oppressed, than to the oppressors: The oppressed cry indeed, but not unto God their maker. As Job said, (Job 24. 12.) Men groan from out of the City, and the soul of the wounded cryeth out, yet God layeth it not to heart; so here Elibu saith, men groan and cry, yet themselves lay not God to heart; None saith, where is God my maker? Thus our translation seems to carry ir, and thus 'tis most generally un-

derstood; None of the oppressed say, &c.

Taking this sense, El hu here begins to assigne the reason why the oppress ed are not delivered. As if he had faid, Tis true, there are a multitude of pressures and oppressions, and they transport all manner of men with passion; the oppressed cry, they make much ado, when they suffer, against them, under whom they suffer : But few or none are so wise, in such a case, as to recollect. themselves, and make serious application to God, putting him in mind of his own gracious nature towards the work of his hands, to have mercy upon it, and in faith to feek to him for remedy and comfort, as being only able to relieve and glad the heart in great extremities; they look not to the hand of God, when they cry out by reason of the arme of the mighty: they only toyle and teare themselves with complaints, they cry out of this and that man, of this and that instrument; but, alas, they find neither redress nor deliverance, because they say not, Where is God my maker? That is, they are more forward to complain of wrong done them by men, than to remember what good, or what favours God hath done them; They do not particularly and specially apply them-

tiberationem, propositum querendi deum,nebeneficiorum VETOI. Coc:

selves to God in their trouble, they do not seek nor enquire ear-Non haber co- ly after God, nor humble themselves before him, or under his gitationem de- mighty hand, neither do they consider what God is to them, nor whether he be with them, and in them; and if they find not God near them, nor in them, they consider not how they may be united que agnitionem to him, or get him near them. We find God, when we heare his aftimationemy; voyce speaking to us by his Word and Spirit, and hearken to his voyce; we find God when we are at peace with him, trust upon ejunifunt a out him confidently, and rejoyce in him comfortably. The oppresfed confidered not these things.

None faith.

Here is an universal Negative, none; that is, not so much as one; yet we may understand it with an allay, none, that is, few or none (as we commonly speak) fay, Where is God my maker? Posfibly many say it with their mouths, but few or none say it; either first, heartily; or secondly, spiritually; or thirdly, humbly; or fourthly, repentingly; or fifthly, believingly; or fixthly, submittingly; and therefore no wonder, if they are not heard and helped when they cry. It is a common thing for men in distress, or under oppression, to cry out, O. God, O Lord, The name of God is taken by many in vaine, when any thing afflicts or hurts them; but few call upon his name. It is no easie matter to cry out, in deed, O God. my maker, or to say with a serious holy and gracious frame of spirit, Where is God my maker?

There is a twofold understanding of these words.

Sunt verba optantis.

First, Some look upon them, as an earnest wish or prayer for help; None faith, Where is God my maker? That is, none faith, O that God my maker would appear in the present manifestations of his power to succour and deliver me. In which sense Elisha is conceived to speak when he smote the waters with Eliahs Mantle, (2 Kings 2. 14.) And said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? As if he had faid, O thou God of Elijah come, shew thy glorious power, and divide these waters.

Sunt verba gratulantin.

Secondly, Others expound them as an expression of praise, or as the words of a man looking up to God in thankfulnels for former benefits, in present straights, Where is God my maker? Where's he that made me, and hath preserved me hitherto? As if Elihu had said, none of these oppressed ones have recourse to God in the day of their calamity, confelling and acknowledging his great goodness to them in their creation and further prefervarion, which might much comfort and encourage their hearts under present grievances and pressures; None faith, Where is God my

The word maker may be taken in a threefold notion; First, for him that hach given us our being. As God is the maker of heaven and of earth, so he is our maker, (Gen. 1. 26, 27.) Secondly, for him that hath continued us in and preferved our being; for providence is a renewed creation. Thirdly, for him who hash raised us up, or preferred us, and done us good all our dayes. In which sense the word is used (1 Sam. 12.6.) And Samuel Said unto the people, it is the Lord that advanced Moses and Aaron. We put in the Margin, made Moses, &c. it is this word, he made them great, and put them in those high places of Government and fingulars were Trust. The Lord is he that maketh men in this sense. We say participium commonly of a man that is advanced to some great place, He is a plurale. Fallo. made man; and on the contrary, of a man that is thrown down, res mei; sie usu He is an undone man. God giveth us a being, and a bodily fa- loquuntur probrick, he protects us in our being, he advanceth us to a wel-being, mi cue modo in all we may call him, and call upon him as our Maker. And when fingulariter men would unmake us, that is, oppress and undo us, then modo pluraliwe should say in faith, Where is God our maker? who once gave us tur. Sensus oulife, and hath fince lifted us up from the gates of death, and put us gularin eft. into a good condition. Many are crying out upon, and possibly, Ideo nomen fome railing and raging at men, but who faith (in the fense ope- ביהוא Eloned) Where is God my maker?

There is one thing further confiderable in the Grammar of the vero deo dici-Text. The Hebrew is plural, or a plural with a fingular; as (Gen. 1. tur interpretes 1.) In the beginning God created: The word Elohim, rendred God, readunt jemper deus, ubiratio is plural; The word Bara, created, fingular. Thus here, Where is habetur fenfur, God my makers? Mr Broughton translates, Where is the puissant non terminatiomy makers. I might spend much time in shewing the consent of nin. Drus: feveral Scriptures in that poynt. Foshua said to the people, (who vid: Merc: Vbi est dezes promised and engaged to serve the Lord) ye cannot serve the Lord, qui secerum Why could they not? the reason sollows; For he is an Holy God, me. Heb: (Fosh. 24. 19.) The Hebrew Aricaly is, God holyes he. Thus the ברא אלהים Prophet expresseth it, (Ifa. 54. 5.) Thy makers is thy husband. Dinta Solomons admonition runs in the same plural stile, (Eccl. 12.1.)

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Remem-

Dem fantim eft. Ad verbum. Dii fantii ipfe. Mont:

Remember now thy Creators in the dayes of thy yeath. But though the Scrip-ure speaks of God sometimes in the singular, sometimes in the plural number, yet the sense is alwayes singular. The true God being but One, and the onemost one, and therefore the plural word (Elohim) is alwayes rendred in the fingular number God. where mention is made of the true God; they having regard to the true meaning or Divinity of the Text, not to the Grammar, or termination of the word. There are usually two reasons given by learned translaters and interpreters, why the true God who is but one in effence and being, is so often expressed in the Hebrew text plurally. First, to infanuate or intimate unto us that Great and glorious mystery of the Blessed Trinity of persons in the Godhead; I say, to intimate it, we cannot make a full or convincing proof from it against any Antitrinitarian Adversary; because though the word Elohim notes a plurality, yet we cannot by any force of the word, determine that plurality precisely to a Trinity, that must be done by other Scriptures, of which we have an abundant ffore to ftop the mouth of all gainlayers. Secondly, they tell us, This plural word is used to set forth the honour of God, according to the usage of Kings and Soveraigne Princes (called Gods) who speak of themselves (though fingle persons) in a plural stile, We and Us. But I conceive, neither is this cogent, though both this and the former may be pioufly improved. So much for the opening of these words, Noman saith, Where is God my maker?

Hence observe.

First, Many cry and complain in affliction, but look not to God in affliction.

(Deut. 32. 18.) Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindfull, and half forgotten God that formed thee. Which as it is often verified in times of peace, plenty, and prosperity, so not seldome in times of trouble, pressure, and affliction. Yea, there are some who cry and complain in affliction, yet then away from God in affliction, (Hos. 7. 14.) They have not cryed unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds; they affemble themselver for corne and wine, and they rebell against me. These are so far from seeking God indeed, or saying, where is our maker, with their heart, that they rebell against him, while they would be relieved and sed by him. How frequently, even at this day, do some men from

storme, and free, and rage, little minding God in their afflictions, though formally or vocally calling on him. 'Tis easie to complain, but hard to pray in a day of trouble. The Tewes are reproved for their regardlesness of God, while they made great preparations in a time of danger and war, or of a feared siege, (1/4.22.8,&c.) Thou didft look in that day to the armour of the house of the forrest; ye have seen also the breaches of the City of David, that they are many, &c. And the houses have ye broken down to fortifie the wall : Te made also a disch between the two walls for the water of the old pool, &c. Here were politick warlike preparations, yes God was little thought upon in all this; as it followeth, (v. 11.) But ye have not looked unto the maker thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago. 'Tis thus with the most of men; when outward misery comes upon them, what crying? what working is there? yet little returning to God, little turning into their own

Secondly, Note. When men oppress and vexus, it is best to have our recourse to God, and apply to him.

That counsel, Look to me and be saved, (Isa. 45. 22.) is true of temporal as well as of eternal falvation. God is our belt friend at all times, even in the best times, and it is best to look to him in the worlt times. David could fay, (Pfal. 73.28.) when flesh, and strength, and heart, when all fayled him; It is good for me to draw near to God. Let our condition be what it will, but especially if we are in a bad condition, it is good, yea best to go to him who hath our times, that is, all the changes of our condition in his hand, to him, in whose hand the arme of the mighty is, and in whose hand alone there is might to help and deliver us from the arme of the mighty. Is it not best to look to him in affliction, who can either support us in, or bring us out of our affliction as pleaseth him? He that made us can protect and save us; therefore in every pinching strait, in every pressing danger, let us go to God in faith and hope, and he will either give us enlargements, or do us good by and in our worst and greatest straits.

Thirdly, Note.

As it is good, when at any time we are in trouble to look to God, so we should then look to God, specially under this relation, as he is our Maker.

It is good then to fay, God is my maker, and I am the work of his hands, therefore he will take care of me, and deliver me out of the hand of my oppreflors. There are five duties which arise from this Confideration, that God is our Maker, First, We should highly effeem and be thankfull for this benefit, our making. Secondly, We should be confident that he who hath made us will preferve us. Thirdly, We should patiently submit to him, when he afflicteth us himself, or suffers others to afflict us. Fourthly, We thould give him glory, by believing that he will take care of us in, or deliver us out of all our sufferings and afflictions. Fifthly, We should not think nor speak hardly of God, because he hath made us subject to tryals, and the exercise of patience; neither should we take it ill, that he hath made others so high or great, that they have power to oppress us. In all these respects, we should look to God our maker, and neither murmure at, nor be afraid in a day of affliction. The Lord himself poynts us to that, (Isa. 51.12, 13.) Who art thou that shou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall dye, and of the son of man which shall be made as grasse, and forgettest the Lord thy maker? It is good in time of affliction to remember God in all our relations, and in this, as our maker, in a three-fold making of us. First, As our maker in a natural capacity, that is, as he hath made these bodies of ours; we may plead with and urge the Lord to take care of and preserve our bodyes, because he hash made them; preservation is an act of providence, and providence followeth creation. Secondly, As our maker in a civil capacity, that is, as he hath made us rich or poor, high or low in the world, or in any worldly enjoyments. Tharach that great Dragon, lying in the midst of the rivers, said, (Ezek, 29. 3.) My river is mine own, and I have made it for my self. But grace reacherh us to say otherwise; if we are rich or strong, God hath made us so; if our river be broad and deep, full and over-flowing, God harh made it so; and if we are poor, and weak, if our river be narrow and shallow, empty and dry, God hath made it so; and who shall say to him, Why hast thou made it so? That God is the maker of our crosse, should make us quiet under it. Thirdly, A godly man should look to God in affliction, as his maker in a spiritual capacity; I do not mean as he hath made our spirits, but as he hath made us spiritual, or as we are his workmanship, (that's the Apostles word) created in Christ Tefors

thing

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fas unto good works, (Eph. 2. 10.) That we are thus wrought, works much upon the heart of God in the day of our affliction. That God hath made us men, that we are his creatures, is a good argument, a faire plea, and moves much; but that he hath made us new men, or new creatures, his Sons by grace, and Temples of his Spirir, that he hath made us holy, believing, righteous, is a far stronger argument, a fuller plea, and moves much more. A foul that can go to God thus, and tell him he is his maker; a foul that can say, (as 'tis said of the Church, Isa. 54. 5.) My maker is my kusband; He that made me, hath married me to himself; a foul that can fay this, may indeed triumph in and over all his tribulations. How fweet is it to have an interest in Christ, and by him a relation to God as our maker in this respect. When the Lord rejects a people to the utmost, he faith he will not be stayd, no not by this relation as their maker, from doing it, (1/a.27.11.) This is a people of no understanding; therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour. As if the Prophet had faid, If any argument could move the Lord to shew mercy, this would do it, to tell him, he hath made such a people, or, he is their maker. But there are none whom the Lord hath made in the third fense, as to a new creation, but he will have mercy on them, and shew them favour; his making of them such, is a greater mercy and an higher favour, thin any they can ask of him; nor are there any of that making, who are of no understanding. So ther, he that is made of God spiritually, needs not care for all the unmaking or undoing he can receive from men, nor fear that he shall ever be unmade or unmercy'd by God. All he can lose in this world, doth not cannot make him miletable, who is made fit for the world to come : He knoweth he hath an estate settled upon him by his Maker, which cannot be taken away. A man thus made, may fay to his spoylers, Ye have taken nothing from me but the foraps and fiveepings, the parings and chippings of my estate: The Archers indeed have forely grieved me, and shot at me, but my bow abides in strength, and the armes of my hands are made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob. He that is spiritually made, or made a new creature, is made for ever, and in every strait he may look to God his Maker, as a helper and restorer. He that made us when we were nothing, can help us when we are reduced to a very nothing. It is an encouragement to go to God for healing, because he hath wounded us; Come, and let us return unto the Lord, (faith the Church) for he hath torne, and he will heale us, he hath smitten, and he will bind us up, (Hos. 6. t.) Much more is it an encouragement to go unto God to be out healer, because he hath been our Maker. He that hath made us, can mend us; He that built us, can repaire us, if we say, as we ought, and have been taught, where is God our maker?

Who giveth fongs in the night.

Those words contain a second Consideration, why the oppresfed should seek to God; he giveth longs, that is, matter of songs, or cause of singing, joy and comfort, even in the night. There are several opinions about the meaning of these words. Some (as I thewed before) interpret this verie of the oppressors; None (of them) fay, Where is God my maker, who giveth longs in the night? So the words are a description, as of the great worldly security, so of the great worldly felicity of those oppressors. Poor men labour all day hard, and being wearied out with their labours, when night cometh they go to bed; But prophane great and rich men, idle away the day, and sport and play and sing away the night. As good men have holy longs in the night, (Ifa. 30. 29.) To shall have a fong as in the night, when a holy Solemnity is kept, &c. So the wicked have their wanton, vaine, revelling fongs in the night, when their fenfual Solemnities are kept. Belfhazer was drinking in the night, and doubtless, he had his musick & songs that night: And as he had his fongs, mirth, and musick in the night, so he said not Where is God my maker, who giveth me songs in the night . he instead of minding God his maker in his mirth, minded only the gods which himself had made (as the text speaks, Dan. 5.4.) They drank mine, and praised the gods of gold and of silver, &c. And thus tis in proportion with all the wicked to whom God gives songs in the night, they say not, where is God my maker? This interpretation which carrieth the fongs to the oppressors before spoken of, contains a truth, yet I shall not stay upon it, but take the words as referring to the oppressed.

Here it may be queried, how doth God give them songs in the night ? I shall not insist upon those conjectures, which some have made about this giving songs in the night. As First, implying God

so gracious, that he giveth us not only in the day, but in the night, occasion of joy inforrow, namely, the view and contemplation of the Heavens and Starrs, which are very pleasant and refreshing,

(Pfal. 19.1.)

Others, Secondly, conjecture, that God may be said to give the forrowful and oppressed ones songs in the night, by the singing of birds in the night, of that bird especially which hath its name from linging in the night, the Nightingul. Some infift much upon these interpretations. It is, I grant, a great mercy of God that when the Sun is down, we have Moon-light and Star-light, and that in the night we have the innocent harmless birds to fing and make us pleasant melody. But leaving these, we may take the words in a double notion; First, Properly; Secondly, Meraphorically.

Properly, and so to give songs in the night, as the night is taken for night time, imports the goodness of God to man, not only in

the day time, but in the night.

Hence Note. God in the night season, as well as in the day, gives his people matter of joy.

Night-mercies deserve and call for day-praises; especially two forts of night-mercies; First, Night preservations, (Pfal. 3. 6.) I laid me down and slept, for thou Lord makest me to dwell in safety. The night is subject to many dangers; The Septuagint render Qui distribuit fully to this sense; Who giveth watch or preservation in the night; nocturns cuthat's matter of praise and thanksgiving to God. Secondly, he Itodias. Sept: gives us cause of praise and finging, not only for preserving our lives while we fleep in the night, but for refreshing us with sleep in the night, (Pfal. 127. 2.) So he givesh his beloved sleep. The Lord gives us not only safety, but sleep. Sweet sleep is a great mercy, (Eccl. 5. 12.) The fleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; and they who fleep sweetly get re-freshing and renewings of strength after all their former labours, for new labours. So that, if we take night properly for the night time, there is much occasion of rejoycing given by God to mankind in general, and more peculiarly to his faithfull fervants, in reference to those common mercies of bodily safety, and the return of natural strength and spirits.

Secondly,

Et am cum nulla ad eum laudandum documenta civcumfulgent, intus ad laudes. Jun:

Secondly, Take night properly; and then this affertion, He giveth fongs in the night, may have this meaning; The Lord gives his people a traifing frame of heart in the night season! When they are wrapped up and compafied about with outward darkness, when they are folitary and alone, when no worldly object holds out any occasion of comfort to them, yet then the Lord lets in a Spiritu excitat light, or thines into their fouls by his good Spirit. The Lord may well be faid to give longs even in the night, when by the immediate work of his Spirit, he filleth our spirits with joyes unspeakable and glorious. These are the most ravishing songs of the night.

> Hence Note. God by his good Spirit doth often suggest sweet meditations and comfortable thoughts to his people in the night.

In the night the Lord minds his servants either of such mercies as they have already received, or of fuch, as according to his promile, he is ready to, or will surely bestow, that so they may be busted in that heavenly work of praising him, and rejoycing in him, when they awake or cannot sleep. This was Davids experience, (Pfal. 17. 3.) Thou hast visited me in the night. Men use to vifit us in the day when we are up or awake. But (faith David) God gives me vifits in the night, when I am in bed he gives me many a fong, or makes me to rejoyce. When we are in our retirements, or freest from the hurry of worldly businesses and enjoyments, then we are in the fittest posture for the entertainment and enjoyment of God. The Lord visits his servants in the night, not only (as David there) to try them, or as elsewhere to instruct them, but to comfort them, as David was assured, (Pfal. 42. 8.) The Lord will command his loving kindness in the day time, and in the night his fong shall be with me. That is, a fong concerning him. I will fing and rejoyce, even in the night time, because of the goodness and kindness of God to me in the day. The experience of Asaph, or of David, communicated in that Pfalm to Asaph, gives further proof of this, (Psal. 77. 6.) where having faid, (v. 1.) I cryedunto God with my voyce, and he gave eare unto me: he adds, (v.6.) I call to remembrance my song in the night; that is, those occasions of joy and singing which God hath heretofore given me : These songs were sweeter

to me than fleep. As it sheweth an excellent frame of spirit to remember the Commandments of God in the night, which David also professed as his practise, (Pfal. 119.55.) I have remembred thy Name, O Lord, in the night, and have kept thy Law. The name of God is any manifestation of God, either in his word or works. And again, (Pfal. 119.62.) At midnight I will rife to give thanks to thee, because of thy right eous judgements. Some wasch in the night to give thanks, (Pfal. 134.1.) others give thanks when they wake at any time in the night; both are acts of purelt love to God, and proceed from purest consolation in God. (Cant. 3. 1.) By night on my bed I fought him. The Spoule doth not fay only, by night I fought him, but by night on my bed, I spend not the night in fleeping, but in feeking him whom my foul loverh. (Pfal. 16.7.) My reines instruct me in the night season; That is, I have as it were discourses and soliloquies, sec et debates about, and strong defires after the things of God, even in the night, That foul is indeed awake to God, which is acquainted with and used to these digine songs in the night, the time of sleep.

Further, Take the word night in a metaphorical notion, as night signifieth a troublesome state; God may be said to give longs in the night, when he comforts us in or at any time of affliction. I need not stay to prove that in Scripture the night is put for affliction, nor need I prove, that, to give inward joy in a day of outward forrow, is to give fongs in the night. The objervation riling from this metaphorical understanding of night, is this,

which the Scripture and experience are full of.

God fends comfort to his people, or causeth them to rejoyce in the midst of their afflictions.

It is the Apostles description of God, (2 Cor. 1.3, 4.) The God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation. What fweet fongs have suffering Saints found in the darkest midnight of their affliction! What inward peace in outward troubles! What foul freedome in bodily restraint! One of the Ancients Cormen in nohath put the question, and answered it. What's a song in the night? He est latitia Tis joy in time of trouble. Whenever God gives a foul joy in intribulationes, time of trouble, he gives a fong in the night. Paul and Sylas lang Greg: in the night, in both notions of night. If we take night in a proper sense, they sang in the night, and in an improper sense, they

were in prison, that was a night of affliction to them, yea it was midnight with them, the power of darkness, or the darkest outward affliction to them, yet, faith the Text, At midnighs Paul and Sylas lang: They had fongs in their mouths, and in their hearts too; they fang so loud that all heard them. And hence we may collect the ftrength of the argument or reason upon which Elibs here faith, God doth not regard the cry of many under oppreision, they make a noyle, but none faith, Where is God my maker, who giveth fongs in the night, who is able to comfort us in all our afflictions, who is able to make darkness light to us, and turn our forrows into longs of joy; they had not these high thoughts of God, nor these holy considences in God, while they lay under the oppressions of men, and therefore God did not regard their cry, nor fave them from the arme of the mighty. This is the first part of the answer which Eliha made to Jobs complaint, that the oppressed were not delivered, though being pressed so sorely they could not forbeare to cry, yea to cry out in their mifery. The next words give us a fuller and more expresse answer to that complaint.

Vers. 11. Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us miser than the soules of heaven.

Vers. 12. There they cry (but none giveth answer) because of the pride of evil men.

Verl. 13. Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Al-

Eliha proceeds in assigning a second reason to highten their sin, who being in distresse, say not, where is God my maker? or he giveth a further account, why the Lord doth not presently attend to the prayers and crys of some men under great oppression. He had shewed in the sormer verse one reason of the Lords sorbearance to help them in such distresses, they did not say heartily, where is God say maker? nor did they remember him according to the special benefits which they sometimes had received from God, even songs in the night.

In this 1 1th verse, Etihu aggravates the sin of such oppressed persons by the consideration of that light, & understanding wherewith God hath indued, and inriched man above the irrational creatures, and which he hath therefore furnished man with, that he might know what to do in a time of distress, in the day of affliction; they say not, Where is God my maker?

Who, not only gives au fongs in the night, (matter of praise, but)

teacheth ses more than the beafts of the earth.

Some of the Jewish Interpreters read these words positively, not (as we) comparatively, or they render them, to shew that God hath appoynted the very beafts to be our Tutors, not (as we) that himself tutors us beyond the beasts: Thus; Who teacheth me by the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wife by the fowls of heaven. This answers what Fob spake in the 12th Chapter of this book, (v.7.) Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee: and the sowle of the air, and they shall tell thee. Tis a truth that God doth teach us by the beafts of the earth, and makes us wife by the very fowls of the air. We may learn much in the School of those creatures who have not only no learning, but no understanding, and may be flirred up to the exercise of excellent vertues, by those which have not the exercise of reason. The Scripture sendeth man, the highest of visible creatures, to the lowest of visible creatures, to creatures so little, that they are scarce visible, for instruction; Go to the Ant thon sluggard, consider her wayes, and be wise, (Pro. 6.6.) There are several observable qualities, and, as I may call them, vertues, not only in the beafts of the earth, and fowls of the air, but in the meanest creeping things, which are very imitable by man; and thus God doth teach us by the beafts of the earth, and by the fowls of the air, vertually, though not formally, by their practife and example, though not by their precepts or rules; for such teachings neither the beafts of the earth nor the fowls of the air have any competency at all. Man alone cannot teach man effectually to conversion and salvation; all that are so taught, are and must be taught of God, (1 Cor. 3. 5, 6, 7.) yet the beafts of the earth, and the fowls of the air, may and do teach us instrumentally to conviction, and if we learn not by them, their teachings (as rude as they are) will be to our shame, consusion, and condemnation

But I rather take the words, as we translate them, comparatively; Who teached us more than the beast of the earth: As if he had said, God teacheth, the beast somewhat, but he teacheth man much more.

L 2

They

nipiamur.

Quiden He- They who expound this context of the wicked man, who opbra orum speci- present the poor, give the sense thus; God teacheth us more than aliter eo referum out avium ven; that is, he teacheth us that we should not like beafts, vex, more invicem, tear and rend one the other, that we should not like the Bear of of the Wood, and the Lyon of the Forrest, nor like the Vultures and ravenous Birds of the air, prey one upon another; They who are fierce against, and unmerciful to their brethren, degenerate into beafts, whom God hath taught no better, but left them to live by rapine and spoyle: Whereas he hath laid more noble principles into the heart of man, and taught him to be kind & charicable, loving, and compationate, not to devoure and vex those of his kind, how much soever inferior and below him in degree. And therefore what a shame is it for men to be more oppressive and cruel to men like themselves, than beasts are to beasts, or fowls to fowls This is a truth; yet I conceive the context is rather to be understood of the oppressed, (as hath been touched before) than of the oppressor, and therefore our reading runs most clearly;

Who teacheth as more than the beaks of the earth.

78% in Gal discere in piel docere significat. Ders nos mijori familiaritate & connatur, quani boftias.

That is, though the very beafts of the earth, are taught somewhat by God, and have a kind of knowledge, yet men are taught of God in a more eminent, transcendent, and noble way, than they, whether wild, or tame, one or other. God doth not fet up fuch a School for beafts, as he doth for man, nor provide such instructions fuerudire dig. for them, as he doth for man; He gives men more means of in-Aruction, he gives them more time for instruction, he takes (as I may fay) more paines to instruct them, rising early, and sending his Ministers now, as the Prophets of old, to teach his people. He every way teacheth us more than he teacheth the beasts of the earth;

And maketh us wifer than the fowls of heaven;

But what ? Are the fowls of the air indued with wildome? I answer, First, wisdome is put sometime for that inbred subtlety, which is no more than an inclination to avoyd that which is hurtful to nature, and to follow that which is suitable to it. That which is wisdome indeed is the proper and peculiar gift of God to men and Angels only, God hath given somewhat like wisdome to the

fowls

fowls of heaven, they have a natural forecast; But what is the wisdome, with which the fowls of heaven are indued, to that wisdome with which man is indued, those men especially, who (through grace) are heires of heaven? What is the wildome which beafts have by a common instinct, to the wisdome which man hath by divine instruction, yea sometimes by divine inspiration. Beafts and birds are wife, they are taught by God what is convenient for their state, yet the best of their knowledge is ignorance, and the top of their understanding folly, compared with man. And hence it is that when men act foolishly or uncomely, they are said in Scripture to be like beasts, to corrupt themselves like brute beafts, to be brutish in their knowledge. We may easi- Do forly conclude the wisdome of birds and beasts extreamly below mich, canicumans, seeing whensoever man acts below himself, or doth any lis, locustus, athing unwisely, he is said to be and do like a beast. The Hebrew mongued scient; word which we translate wifer, being applyed in Scripture to Em word which we translate mifer, being applyed in Scripture to Em- quid to car amets or Anis, to Conies, to Locusts, to Spiders, (Pro. 30. 24.) gans, sed quod doth not imply, that they truly know either what or why they ipsum opus had of such or such a work, it only sheweth that the work which they beat ordinem do, hath an order, usefulness, and reason in it, according to know-rationem. ledge. Solomon faith indeed, those foure little creatures are ex- Coc; reeding wife, not that they exceed the wildome of man, but among brutes they exceed, or are among them of the first forme for wisdome. He maketh us wiser than the sowls of the air.

Hence observe, FirA, The beafts of the earth, and fowls of the air, have a kind of knowledge, and mildome;

They have somewhat which is Analogous to or like knowledge and wisdome, yet neither knowledge nor wisdome strictly taken. Some of the Ancients have reported to us, the opinion of the Augustinus Manichees, and Marcionites, who maintained, that the beafts of lib. 6. c niva the earth, and fowls of the air, were indued with reason, properly so called; which opinion was by them justly numbred among piph: lib. I.
heresies, and indeed a little reason may serve for the rest. herefies, and indeed a little reason may serve for the resutation Har: 42. of that opinion, which afferes beafts and fowls indued with reason; Though some other learned men in their time, and Great Philosophers have afferred as much as the Manichees or Marcionites in this poynt. Quintilian said, that beasts did rather want an abi-

lity of speaking, than of understanding: And Platarch endeavoureth to prove the same in his Dialogue about that Question, Whether brute Beafts have or are endued with Reason? But we affirm the wisdome of Brutes is only brutish, and at most, but similitudinary to the rational actings of man & a similitude of, or somwhat like wisdom and reason cannot with reason be denyed them. It's faid of the Serpent (Gen. 3.1.) that he was more sabtil than any Beast of the field, which the Lord God had made, And when Christ saith, (Math. 10. 16.) Be ye as wife as Serpents, he implyeth, according to that in Genefic, that Serpents have some shadow of wisdome, somwhat like wisdome. And when the Prophet 7eremiab (Chap. 8.7.) faith, The Stork, the Turtle, the Crane, and the Swallow, know the time of their coming, he affirms that those Fowls have a kind of knowledge. Another Prophet upbraids men with the Knowledg of Beafts, (Isa. 1.3.) The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the As his Masters Crib, but, &c. Here in the Text, to learn or be taught is ascribed to Beasts, because they are tamed, broken, brought to hand, and made useful for the service of man. And wisdome is ascribed to the Fowls of the Air, because they keep their seasons duly, make their Nests safely and fiely, and bring up their young ones tenderly, with pains and diligence. There are very frange instances, scarce credible, given by Pliny and others, concerning the fagacity and docibility of some Beasts of the earth, and Fowls of the Air; we are told how they have acted more like rational creatures, than brutes: And daily experience gives proof enough, that they have a kind of knowledge, reason and wisdome, only we cannot allow them reafon, wisdome, or knowledge in kind: They do works of Reason and Understanding, only (which is mans excellency) they understand nor the reason of their works.

Secondly, Note;
The knowledge or wisdome (such as it is) that the Beasts of the
Earth, and Fowls of the Air have, is of God.

If he teacheth men more than the Beast's of the earth, and maketh them wifer than the Fowls of the Air, then in some way and measure he teacheth them, and maketh them wise. That wisdome and knowledge, whatsoever it is, which Beast's and Fowls have, is planted in them by God; they have that which serves their

turn,

turn, and answers their state, by a common instinct of nature, which man hath answerable to his state, either by immediate Revelation, or by means of instruction from God. So then, Beasts and Birds receive their peculiar qualities and abilities from God, as well as their Being: And God hath bestowed those qualities, which are shadows of wildome and understanding, upon Beasts and Birds, not only for their own preservation, but for the benefit of man, that they may be more useful to him, and fitter for his service. As God hath made both Man and Beast for himself, so he hath made the Beasts of the Earth, and Fowls of the Air for Man, either to serve mans necessity, or to procure his honest delight: And that they might reach both these ends, he hath surnished them accordingly. A creature which hath not somwhat in it like Reason, could be little made use of by the Reason of Man,

Thirdly, Note;
Man is far better taught, than either the Beasts of the Earth,
or Fowls of the Air.

Man, as Man, hath that in him, which wonderfully exceeds the Beafts of the Earth and Fowls of the Air; he hath Reason in him, which they have not; he is a reasonable creature, which they are nor, and so can do that which they cannor. Man, by the power of Reason is able, first, to propose to himself an end in what he doth; secondly, to chuse fit means for the attaining of that end; neither of which Beafts can do. And if any man be without wifdome to propose to himself a right end, and to chuse due means leading thereunto, there's little difference between that man and a beast, surely all his wisdome is but brutish, Further, God hath not only given Man a fense of those things which are hurtful tohim, as he hath to the Beafts of the Earth and Fowls of the Air; but God hath given Man an Understanding, by which he knowing God, may worthip him, by which also he may see into and foresee the causes of things, and likewise rightly apply known means, either to prevent or remedy evils, and to bring about that which is Again, as God hath bestowed that wonderful bleffing of Reason upon Man, above Beasts and Fowls, which makes him capable of higher instructions and fruitions, than either of them; so God hath provided higher and better means for the instruction of Man, than he hath for the instruction of Beasts. He teach-Fi:ft esh us more. For

First, He hath given his Word to Man, not to Beasts; he hath not made a Bible for the Beast of the Earth, and the Fowls of the Air; but for Man he hath, that he might both know his will and do it, know his favour or good will to him, and enjoy it. Secondly, He hath given some men his Spirit, he hath not bestowed his Spirit upon any Beafts, nor upon any Fowls of the Air: and because his Spirit teacheth us, we are said to be taught of God, eminently taught of God. Thirdly, he hath given us his Ordinances, and appointed Officers, or fet persons in Office, to mannage and hold out those Ordinances, wherein himself is both honoured and enjoyed. He (faiththe Apostle, Eph. 4. 11, 12.) gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ, for the bringing in, and building up of fouls. He sheweth his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes and Judgments unto Israel, (Plal. 147.19.) and as it follows in the next verse of the same Pfalm, He bath not dealt so with any Nation, as with his Ifrael, his Church, to be sure he hath not dealt so with the Beasts of the Earth, nor with the Fowls of the Air, as was shewed also in opening the Text.

Further as to the matter in question about the Providences and dealings of God with man; God hath taught Man much more than Beasts: As First, That all things which befall us, come from, and are ordered by himself. Secondly, That we ought to receive the Rule and take instruction from God, how to behave our selves under his various dealings. Thirdly, He hath taught us at all times, and in all turns of Providence, to stay our selves in waiting upon him; (Psal. 37.7.) Fourthly, He hath taught us in times of trouble and affliction, to cry to him, and call upon him as his children in faith, not barely to complain, much less to be impatiently

outragious like Beafts.

Now if God hath taught us more than the Beafts, then, we should not live by sense, nor pursue sensible things, as Beafts do, but aspire to and seek after union and communion with God, whom the beafts of the earth know not. How greatly will this aggravate the sin of man, if having been taught more than beafts, any man should be found to have learned less than beafts; as will appear yet more in the next observation but one.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Elibu at least incimates this Note;

Men sometimes att but as, or indeed below, the very beasts of the earth, and the fowls of the air:

For (faith he) they say not, Where is God our maker, who gives sus songs in the night? who teacheth us better, or more, than the beafts of the earth. As if he had faid, The beafts of the earth answer In extremam the instinct of nature, (which is all the cost God bestows in teach-studie income ing them) better than men do those costly teachings and in-incidinus of said Aructions which God bestows upon them by his Word, by his Spi- pientiones nos for all these waves dorn the Lord teach and instruct men from Sapientes nos. for all these wayes doth the Lord teach and instruct men from day to day; yet men often act, not only beside and below, but quite contrary to all these teachings. The bealts of the earth keep up to the instruction which they have received, the instinct of nature, they move according to that; but man who hath an underflanding, doth not alwayes move fultably to his understanding; man hath reason, yet he doth not alwayes regulate his motions by reason, but is hurried by passion, or led by sense, as a beast. (Pfal 49.20.) Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish; that is, though his state and spheare be higher than a beast, yet he moves by as low a principle as a beast. even by sense, or sensual appetite, either irrascible, or concupiscible, as a beast doth. By the man in honour, that understandeth not, the Pialmist intends not a fool that hath no understanding, nor an Idiot that hath no use of reason, but he is said not to underfland, because he doth not use his understanding; as he in the Parable that did not use his Talent, is said to have none, (.Mat. 25. 29.) Understanding is a Talent, and a great one, a choyce one too. A man that hath the greatest natural understanding and reafon, yea possibly the greatest learning, and experience, may be faid, not to understand, when he doth not behave himself underflandingly, or according to the Lawes and Rules of reason. Men of the best understanding and greatest honour are like the beasts that perish, as to their frailty, that is, they dye; which may be the meaning of the Pfalmist at the 12th verse, where he saith, Man being in honour abideth not, he is like the beafts that perish. But all men that are in honour and understand not their dury, or do not what they understand, are like the beasts that perish, as to their

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inability, that is, they live as if they had nothing, but (what beafts have) sense and appetite to govern their lives by. He that doth not practife according to knowledge what he knows, is like, and worse than a beast that hath no knowledge. For when a beast doth any thing absurdly, he doth like a beaft; but when man doth any thing abjurdly, he degenerates or falleth from his own forme, he doth not like a man, and the efore is worfe than a beaft. And that's it, I conceive, which the Apostle Jude aimes at in the 10th verse of his Epissle, where rebuking a very vile generation of men, Revilers, who speak evil of those things which they know not; he prefently adds, But what they know naturally as brute-beafts, in thefe things they corrupt themselves. When he faith, What they know naturally as brute-beafts, his meaning is, what they know in common with beafts, that is, by fense and appetite, which are common to man and beaft, (as reason and understanding are common to Man and Angel:) Now (faish the Apostle) what they know naturally as brute beafts, in those things they corrupt themselves, which brute beasts do not. For these words, as brute beasts, are to be taken in construction and interpretation, with the former part of the senzence, What they know naturally, not with the latter, they corrupt themselves. Their knowledge indeed is no better than the knowledge of brute beafts, natural, but in corrupting themselves they are unlike to, and do worse than brute beasts, who run not to such excesses; yet there is nothing more common in Scripture, than to say that men act the beast, when they sin, and put off those manners which become and are worthy of an ingenuous and rational man. For as man is partaker both of a spiritual and sensitive nature, fo he takes his denomination from that part to which in his disposition and conversation he most inclines: Hence he is sometimes called God, or an Angel of God, and sometimes he is compared to the most hurtful of beasts, a Lyon, sometimes to the worst of beasts, to a Fox, to a Wolfe, to a Dog, to a Swine, to a generation of Vipers, to what not, which may put a mark of dishonour and reproach upon him.

Fifthly, Note; It's a great shame, reproof, and reproach to man, when he atts unanswerably to the teachings of God.

It is better to be a beast in or by nature, than to be a beast (and continue

continue so) in qualities and conditions. O what a reproach is it, that they who have a far better nature than beafts, should lead no better lives than a beaft, yea possibly much worse! The Pialmist crys shame upon such (Pfal. 32. 9.) Be ye not as the Horse, or as the Mule, which have no understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near anto thee. The Horle and Mule are untuly creatures, if left to their own rule, they have no understanding how to mannage and order themselves; they must be mannaged and order'd by bit and bridle in the hand of a skilful rider, else they do more burt than good service to those that come near them: Now, faith the Lord to man, Be not you like the untaught or unmanning'd Horse and Mule; as ye are better taught, so ye should have better manners. We say of some men, they are better fed than taught; and we may fay of many men, they are better taught than manner'd; they mend not their manners, though daily taught, yea urged to mend them. For this neglect the Lord reproves the fluggard, (Pro. 6. 6.) Go to the Ant thou fluggard, consider her wayes, and be mise; thou doest not answer natural, much less Scriptural light, thou doest not learn by any teachings; one of the least of my creatures may teach thee more than thou hast yet learned of all the teachers which I have fent thee. The little Ant that dwels upon a Mole-hil, that creeps upon the ground, may teach thee better manners, and make thee wifer. Art thou not ashamed to need such a teacher, having had so many teachers? That's also the sense of those rebukes which the Prophet powres out (with a strong contestation) upon the people of Ifrael, calling Heaven and Earth to witness against them, (Isa. 1. 2.) Hear O Heavens, and give ear O Earth, I have nourished, and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. But how doth the Lord convict them of rebellion, and by whom? even by the teachableness and tractableness of the dullest brutes, The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Ass his Masters crib: int Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. As if he had faid; The Ox, and the Ass out-do you, the Ox knoweth his owner that feeds him, and the very Ass knows the crib where he is fed. These beasts take notice of regard and submit to their Master and Benefactor: but I/rael doth neither observe nor submit to me, who have tenderly nursed and plentifully nourished them; who have (as the Lord spake by his Prophet, Hof. 11. 4.) been to them,

them, as one that taketh the joke off their jawes, and layeth them meat, the fat and the sweet, the finest of the wheat, and honey out of the Rock to feed upon; and, which is more than this, who have not only fed them better, but taught them better than the Ox or Ass; O ye Heavens, be astonished at this! Further, as in this Scripture the Lo d contested with, and reproved his people by the bealts of the earth, so he doth it in another by the fowls of the air, (Jer. 8. 6, 7.) I (faith the Lord) hearkned and heard, but they spake not aright, &c. every one turned to his course, (his sinful course, or his course in sin) as the Horse rusheth into the battle; that is, fiercely, fearlefly, prefumptuoufly, at once flighting, at least forgetting, both their own danger, and my command. As the Lord thus rebukes the head-strong obstinacy and wilfulness of that people, by their likeness to the Horse; so in the next verse he reproves their blindness and blockishness, by their unlikeness to the Sto k, &c. Yea the Stork in the Heaven knoweth her appoynted time, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow observe the time of their coming, but my people know not the Judgements of the Lord. Then followeth, (v. 8.) How do ye fay, we are wife, and the Law of the Lord is with us; Lo certainly in vaine made heit, the pen of the Scribe is in vaine: As if he had faid; You have been raught, you have had the Law of the Lord, and you are ready to boast of it, as the Apostle observed (Rom. 2.23.) but with what face can ye take it upon your selves to be wise men, or arrogate wildome to your felves, or so much as own the Law. when you are so unready to pay that obedience which you owe to it. The Crane, the Turtle, and Swallow, the very fowls of Heaven, follow the light of nature better than you have done the light of Scripture and daily instruction. These reasonless creasures, reason with themselves more rationally than you have done; They say thus in themselves, It is best for us to change our quarters, and take our flight to some more benigne or milder region, for here the season grows sharp, and the weather tempestuous, if we abide here we starve, we perish with cold and hunger: But you my people are so sottish, that you change neither your minds nor manners, you mend neither your wayes nor your works; what changes soever I bring upon you, or how much soever I vary my wayes and workings towards you, you apply not your felves so my course and dealings with you, but fill take your own course, fay I or do I what I will; you neither embrace seasons of grace and offers of mercy, nor do ye labour either to prevent or to avoyd those storms of wrath and divine vengeance, with which you have been often threatned, and which hang in the clouds ready to drop down and overwhelme you. And will ye fay after all this, we are wife, when the fowls of the air appear wifer than you? And will you fay, the Law of the Lord is with us, when they guide themselves better by the Law of nature? And forasmuch as it is thus with you, have I not reason to conclude, that, Lo, certainly in vaine made he it, the pen of the Seribe is in vaine; that is, it was to little or no purpose that God at first enacted and publithed his Law, (Exod. 20.) or appoynted Scribes to write it our, that Copies of it might be transferred to and read by his people, (Deat. 17. 18. Chap. 31. 9.) Is not both the making and writing of the Law vaine, (as to you) feeing you are thus vaine and foolish, even much more vaine and foolish than the Stock in the Heaven, than the Turtle, Crane, and Swallow, notwithstanding the making and writing out of the Law for you?

This will fill the faces of the wicked, that is, both of the prophane and formal professors of the Lords name, with shame and consustion for ever, when they shall be made to see and consesse, that the beasts of the earth have followed their light, better than they, though God hath taught them more than the beasts of the earth; and that the fowls of the air have carried themselves more wisely than they, though God hath made them wiser than the fowls

of the air.

Vers. 12. There they cry (but none giveth answer) because of the pride of evil men.

When Elihu had thus closely hinted the sin of those persons that acted below beasts and birds in their assistions, he proceeds to rell us, what they do in their assistion; There they cry (but none giveth answer.) We translate these words, But none giveth answer, in a parenthesis; we may read the verse without ir, and transferre those words to the end of the verse, There they cry, because of the pride of evil men, but none giveth answer. That is, (as some give the meaning) they being oppressed by the pride of evil men, cry out of their insolencies, and their own miseries, and yet can get no answer; for the reasons given in the two for-

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A ficiebus superbia malorum. Mont: Propter Superbiam malorum. Pagn: Ibi vel tune, Adverbia loci pro adverbiis temporis passim fumuntur. Merc:

mer verses, that is, because they do not heartily and believingly apply themselves to God their Maker. Mr Broughton understands it thus of the pride of oppressors; There (saith he) they cry, but he answers not concerning the wrong-doers pride. Others take it for the price of the oppressed; There they cry. The word rendred there, is an Adverb of place, but here it notes the time or estate rather in which these persons lived; they were in an oppressed estate or condition, when they cryed, yet saith the Text, None giveth answer; that is, they have no help when they cry; they cry to men, yea they cry to God for help, but have none, help is far from them. God doth not answer them immediately by himself, neither doth he fend them answer by the hand of any other. Now, what is the reason of this? The Text gives it partly (yet somewhat obscurely) in this verse, more fully and clearly in the verse following. The reason given here is their pride, Because of the pride of evil men; that is, because themselves are so proud, they are at once poor and proud, humbled but not humble; they are oppressed and subdued under the power of men, yet their pride remains unsubdued and in full power; they are laid low in estate, but they are not lowly in spirit : proud men oppress them, and they, though oppressed, are still proud; their hearts are not brought down, though they are come down wonderfully, as the Prophet spake of the captivated Tewes, Lam. 1. 9. They are fallen before men in misery, but they are not fallen before God in humility; they cry of wrong, but themselves are not right, and that's the reason why they are not righted; There they cry(but none giveth answer) because of the pride of evil men. This also is a good sense, and may yeild us profitable instruction; I leave the Reader to his choyce, both being safe and usefull. There they cry, &c.

Note hence.

First, They that are oppressed, and brought low, will be crying and complaining,

Both God and Men shall hear of them: There they cry. An afflicted condition, is a complaining condition; Nature being pinch't will speak. I (said Job, Chap. 7. 11.) will not refraine my mouth, I will speak in the anguish of my beart, I will complain in the bitterness of my soul. I mourn in my complaint, said David, (Pfal.

(Psal. 55.2.) The title of the 102d Psalm runs thus; A prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, and powreth out his complaint before God.

Note; Secondly, Some in their afflictions do nothing but cry, nothing but complain.

Eliba doth not fay, There they repent, and there they humble themselves, and there they turn to God, but there they cry; that they are troubled is the all, the only thing that troubles them. 'Tis said before, God teacheth man more than the beafts of the Earth; but many in a day of affliction, do no more than the Beafts of the Earth. A Beaft, when hurt, will cry, he will rage and roare; and that's as much as many men do when they are hurr, though God hath taught them more, many lestons more, which they should be practifing under forrowful dispensations. The Ox loweth, and is taught no more, when he wants fodder, the Ass brayeth, and is taught no more, when he wants graffe; but man is taught to act repentance, and faith, and patience, and submission to the will of God in want. How sad is it when we hear nothing but flesh cry in man, or when nothing is cryed for by man but flesh, that is, the supplyes of Nature, in the day of his distress. As 'cis said of those (Hosea 7. 14.) They have not cryed uxto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds: they affemble themselves for corn, and for mine, and they rebel against me. How miserable are they in their miseries, whose tongues cry to God, but not their hearts, or their hearts being filen; who cry for corne and wine, not for grace and repentance, or not for grace to repent; who cry much because they suffer evil, but not at all because they have done evil, yea who are doing evil at the very time when they are crying out because of the evils which they suffer: Such was the wretched frame of those in the Prophet; They affembled themselves for corne and for mine, and rebelled against God. 'Tis bad enough, when there is crying, and nothing but crying, this is to cry but as beafts cry; but to cry and rebel against God, is to be worse than beasts, for beasts do not rebel against God when they are pinched with want, and cry. It is fad to be in afflictions; to be put to cry in afflictions is more fad; only to cry for the affliction is yet more fad, when nothing comes

comes from a man but a cry, there is nothing in the cryer, but what is meerly of man; but to be found finning against God, while we are crying out in our affliction is most sad, that's the saddest and worst condition of man in affliction. The Lord teacheth his people better, let us shew our selves better taught, than only to cry in our afflictions; and let it be the abhorrence of our souls for ever to sin at all, much more to sin up to rebellion against God in our affliction, that it should be said of any of us as of that wicked King Ahaz, (2 Chron. 28.22.) that in the time of any distress, we have trespassed more against the Lord.

Thirdly, Whereas those oppressed ones cryed, yet (according to the second interpretation) continued proud and naught.

Observe,
The greatest oppression and worldly trouble, cannot break the power of sin, nor bring down the proud heart of man.

Neither oppression from man, nor affliction from God, can break the pride of mans spirit. These were oppressed, yet proud still. Our estates may be broken, our relations broken, our comforts broken, yet our hearts remain unbroken. The oppressed are many times, as proud as their oppressors, and they who are unjustly dealt with, are as bad as they that deale unjustly with them. Oppressors (though not all who oppress) are alwayes bad, and the oppressed are many times so too, even as bad as their oppresfors. There is no proof of any mans grace or goodness by this, that he is oppressed, or wronged; for he may be wronged, and ground to powder with oppression, yet his heart as hard as a nether Milstone, and his spirit as high, and as much listed up as Lucifers. There is nothing in affliction, trouble, or oppression, that can humble the heart of man; the Spirit of God, God himself must do it. Outward changes work no inward change; we may be emptied from vessel to vessel, from one condition to another, yet have our fin-sent remaining in us. It was, indeed, said of Moab, (fer. 48.11.) He hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity, (that is, he hath not been troubled much in his own Land, nor carried into strange Lands, as Ifrael hath been) therefore his tast remained in him, and his fent is not changed; that is, as he still retains his civil state and strength, so his spiritual vanity, impiety, and impurity, even as Wines that have not been drawn off the Lees, and put into other Cask, (to that the Scripture there alludes) retain their first tast and sent or smel, and are not meliorated or made more fit for the palat and stomack of those that drink them. Now (I say) as many for want of changes or afflictions, are not mended, so some mend not though they have many changes and afflictions; nor can any thing or affliction mend us, or work a change of heart and life in us, unlesse grace work with it.

Fourthly, Whereas it is faid, they cry, but none giveth answer,

God doth not hear and answer them;

Note; The crys of proud, or bad men, how much foever they are oppressed, do not move God, nor will be answer them.

There is no reason he should answer their cry, (though they have reason enough to cry) who will not answer his call, his command; let such cry and cry, tear the air, and rend their throats with crying, they shall not be answered. Job saith of the hypocrite, (Chap. 27.9.) Will God bear his cry when trouble cometh upon him? No, he will not. Solomon leaves the contemners of wifdoms counsel under the same doom, (Pro. 1.28.) Then shall they call, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they stall not find me. But when was this Then in which they called, and the Lord would not answer? The 27th verse tells us, The when or time of this rejection, it was when they had most need of hearing and acceptation, even when their feare (that is, the thing feared, or at least which made them afraid) came upon them, as desolation, and their destruction as a whirlwird; when those sad Messengers came they sought God early, that is, earnessly and diligently, but could not find him : But what was the reason of this refusal? They hated knowledge, and did not chuse the fear of the Lord, (v. 29.) They had been wicked, and nought, before tre uble came, and when trouble was come they were no better, therefore the Lord regarded not either their persons or their cryes. The Lord (faith the Apostle preaching to the Athenians, Atts17.27.) is not far from every one of us; yet tis faid (Pro. 15. 29.) The Lord is far from the wicked, but he heareth the prayer of the righteons: He is far, that is, far from hearing and answering, far from helping and relieving the wicked when they pray. The Lord

Lord is not far from any of us as men, for in him we live, move, and have our being, (v. 28.) and he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things, for the support of life and natural being; but he is far from all proud men, as to any complacency in their persons, and as to the hearing of their prayers. He is far from hearing them, and he knows them a far off, (Pfal. 138. 6.) that is, he deals with them as with men at a distance. Thus the Lord told the impenitents among his own people by the Propher, (I/a.1.15.) Though you make many prayers, I will not bear, for your hands are full of blood. Ye are full of bloody fins, and ye have not humbled your felves, nor cleanfed your hearts and hands by the blood of the Covenant to this day; and being in that cafe, you may cry and pray till your hearts ake, and your tongues ake too, yet no prevailing with God, no grant, no hearing. Another Prophet tells them as sad newes from the Lord, (Jer. 11.11.) Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape, (or, go forth of) and though they (ball try unto me, I will not heark en to them. Though the Lord threatned, I will bring fuch evil upon them, that they shall not escape; they might say, well, but when the evil hath taken hold of us, we hope God will hear us, and deliver us. No, faith God, when the evil hath overtaken and arrested you, yet your prayers shall not overtake me; Though you sry, yet I will not hearken unto you. That's a dreadful Scripture of the same import, (Pfal. 18. 41.) They cryed, but there was none to fave them: even unto the Lord, but he answered them not. They cryed being in great diffresse, and they cryed to the Lord; he brings in that, left any should say, they cryed indeed, but possibly 'twas to falle gods, to idols, poslibly they knockt at a wrong doore, and so were not heard: No, they cryed to the Lord, to the Lord by name; they were right as to the object of prayer, but their hearts were not right; they were not right subjects of prayer. That once blind man saw this truth, when answering the Pharisees about the person by whose power he received his fight, he told them plainly, (Job. 9. 31.) We know that God heareth not finners; that is, Such as love and live in fin, such as go on impenitently in their sins. By this answer he closely, but strongly consured that blasphemous opinion and censure of the Pharisees, who reputed and reported the Lord Jesus Christ, who came into the world to save finners, as one of the vilest finners in the world, and upon that account

got him crucified at last. As if the man had said, Were he that cured me of my blindness such a sinner as you reckon him to be, he could never have obtained power from God to cure me of my blindness, for we know God heareth not sinners. When men fin and pray as it were by turns, their prayers are turned into fin, and therefore will not be returned in mercy. God sometimes hears finners in wrath and judgement, and he sometimes will not hear Saints, as to the grant of the thing in hand prayed for, in love and mercy; but he never denies praying Saints in wrath, nor doth he ever hear a finner (fuch a one as is here intended) in mercy

when he prayeth.

Now, as when the Disciples heard Christs answer to the Pharisees question about Divorce, they presently said, (Math. 19.10.) If the safe of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry; so some hearing this doctrine, that God heareth not proud sinners when they cry or pray, may possibly say if the case of the proud be thus with God, it is not good for them to pray at all. To such I answer, this doctrine is not urged to make proud or impenitent finners to leave praying, but to leave their pride, 'tis urged to make them humble under their oppressions and afflictions, not to make them prophane. They who (as they are) cannot get by prayer, certainly they cannot get by casting off prayer. What aniwer can they have who cry not at all to God, when some may cry and get no answer! as Eliha here speaks, There they cry, but none giveth answer, because of the pride of wicked men. This sense or interpretation most insisted upon in this 12th verse, will appear more full and faire in opening the 13th in which Elibu brings down what he said here into a strong and peremptory conclusi-vioru confiron; or the next verse renders another reason why God would not mationem Epirelieve those oppressed ones, It was not only for the pride of their phonemain vispirits, (v. 12.) but also for the emptiness and heartlesness of e subject. their prayers; or because the prayers of proud and evil men are heartless or empty. of Authority, principower of a false

Vers. 13. Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.

They cry, but God will not hear : why will he not hear? what hinders? He tells us both why and what. Surely , 27'U temeri-

tas, falfnas,

mendacium;

dicitur de re

O mutili.

Surely God will not hear vanity.

What is vanity? What faith vanity? hath vanity a tongue? can vanity speak? the Text laith, God will not hear vanity. 'Tis frequent in Scripture, to ascribe a tongue, and a voyce to fin of any kind; though some fins are more vocall, and speak louder thin others, yet all speak. But when he faith, Surely, (or, without all Queltion) the Lord will not hear vanity, by vanity we are to understand vaine men praying; or vanity is put for the prayers and crys of those persons who are as vaine as vanity it self. The word rendred vanity, signifieth a lie, as also rashness, temerity; God will neither hear rash-headed, nor false-hearted prayers, he will not hear vaine prayers, or the prayers of vaine men. The falfa vans, levi Abstract is often put for the Concrete in Scripture, (Pfal. 107. 42.) All iniquity shall stop her mouth. When the Lord brings about that mighty work, the bringing down of the mighty, & fees the poor on high, (those that are at once poor and humble the Lord will set on high), then Iniquity, that is, wicked men, men of iniquity, shall stop their mouths, or have their mouths stopt, they shall not have a word to say, as gaine-saying that righteous and glorious work of God. So here, God will not hear wanity, that is, vaine men, or men that pray vainly; all that, which men speak, or act, is vaine or vanity, if it be not good, if it be not answerable to the will and ends of God; yea what soever prayer doth not proceed from faith, and flow from a pure hearr, is vanity, 'cis but Araw, and Aubble, drofs, and dung. God will not hear vanity,

Neither will the Almighty regard it.

He that will not hear, will much less regard vanity. The sense is gradual, regarding is more than hearing, we may put both together, he will not hear with regard, nor regard what he hears from such. The strong God, who hath all power in his hand, the power of Authority, or the power of a Judge, will not hear vanity. The All-mighty, The All-sufficient, who hath all power of efficiency in his hand, the nourisher, and preserver, the punisher and correcter of all men; this Shaddai will not regard vanity, he will not give it a look with respect, no not one good look. The word fignifies to fix, or fer the eve with strong intention uron any thing O fixes oculis or person. The Prophet Elisha spake to this sense, though he used another

MW intendit ocales de vianother word, when he faid to the King of Ifrael, (2 King. 3.14.) intuition oft, so-Were it not that I regard the presence of the King of Judah, I would licite observanot look to thee, nor fee thee. The Lord will not regard, he will not wit. look to vanity, to the prayers of vaine men, he will as it were thut his eyes, he will not fee though he doth fee; The Almighty will not regard it.

Hence Note; First, The prayers of vaine and evil persons, are vaine things.

The Text doth not say, their oaths are vaine, and their lies are vaine, and their idle words are vaine, but their cry, their crys in prayer to God are vaine, yea vanity. There may be vanity in the prayer of a good man, but his prayer is not vanity. That's a just reproof upon the good works of many, which Christ gave the Angel of the Church of Sardis, (Rev. 3. 3.) I have not found thy works perfect, or, I have not found thy works full. Though that Angel had done good works, and possible was full of good works, yet his wo ks were not full. A man may be full of prayer, pray often, yet his prayer not full, his prayers may be empty, vaine prayers; that's a vaine thing which is an empty thing. How vaine are they whose best things are vanity! If the prayers of a man are vanity, then certainly all is vanity; and we may fay of him in the whole bulke of all, he is vanity of vanities, all is vanity. When once God calls a mans prayer, and hearing, vanity; when he calls those works, which are good for the matter of them, vanity, then the man is indeed altogether vanity. You will say, when is prayer vanity, or a vaine thing? I shall answer it in a few particulars.

First, That prayer is vaine, or vanity, which is not put up in faith. A faithless prayer is a fruitless prayer. All the prayers of an unbeliever, or of him who is in a state of unbeliefe are vaine; and the prayers of a believer, that is, who is in his state a believer, are vaine, if he hath not faith about that thing for which he prayeth. Now if the prayer of a believer is vaine, when he hath not actual faith, then the prayer of an unbeliever must needs be

vaine, who hath no habitual faith.

Secondly, All the prayers that are for our lufts, or when we resolve to continue in the practise of any lust, are vaine prayers. When we do not pray with a purpose to glorifie God, with what we shall obtain by prayer, but only to serve our own turns, and

so bestow it upon our lusts, that's a vaine prayer, (James 4.3.) Such praying is rather a mocking than a worthiping of God, a ferving of our felves rather than a ferving of God. How do they abuse God in prayer, who cry to him for help, whom they have no mind to honour? who would faine be heard of God, yet have no heart to hear God?

Thirdly, That's a vaine prayer, when we pray meerly to get ease, or deliverance from an affliction, not at all minding our profiting by, or the improvement of an affliction. 'I'is not faith in God, but sense of our own smart, which moves to pray, when we Tales clamores rather look how to get off our burdens, than out of our fins, or to non fides. fed get out of the fire, than to get out our drofs; when we pray more to have the plague taken away, than our hard and proud hearts, that is a vaine prayer; 'tis like the prayer of Pharaoh, who begged that he might be delivered; but it was the plague of God for his fin, for his hard heart, that troubled him; his hard heart, his finning against God never troubled him. Thar ash-like prayers, are vaine prayers.

Fourthly, Those prayers are vaine which we make in our own frength. What can those prayers be, which go forth in our strength, seeing we are told that we know not what to pray, much less then how to pray, but as the Spirit of God helpeth our infirmities, (Rom. 8. 26.) Unlesse the Spirit make intercession for us, that is, make our intercessions for us in our hearts, as Christ maketh intercession for us in heaven, we pray in vaine.

Fifthly, Those are vaine prayers, which we make in our own name, not in the name of Christ. And remember, though it be an easie matter to name Christ in prayer, yet itis no easie matter to pray in the name of Christ. Tis as common as that which is commonest, for all forts of people, yea for children, to name Christ in prayer; but to pray in the name of Christ, is the peculiar work of the Spirit in the heart of a true believer. If the Reader defire to know more distinctly what it is to pray in the name of Christ, I refer him for some help towards it to the 17th verse of the 16th Chapter, where also the requisites of pure and powerful prayer, are more fully held out.

Sixthly, Angry passionate prayers are vaine prayers. The Lord loves zeal and much warmth of affection in prayer, but he cannot abide wrath, or any the least sparks of passion in prayer. The Apostles

malorum fenfus extorquet.

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Apostles Rule is, (1 Tim. 3.8.) I mill that men prayevery where, lifting up pure hands, without wrath, and mithout doubting. A peaceable heart is as necessary in prayer, as a pure hand. When a soul coming to God in prayer, hath I know not what wrathful and angry disputes within himself against his Brethren, how can he look for a gracious acceptance with God? Will the Lord be pleased with us, while we nourish secret displeasure against our Neighbour? Now be sure when you go to God for mercy and savour, that ye carry no wrath in your spirits towards man, one or other; therefore Christ hath taught us in that most perfect model of prayer, which he hath left us, (when we ask the forgiveness of our own trespasses) to surgive those that trespasse against us. We must lay down our unquiet thoughts of revenge, if we would have savour with, and compassion from God.

Seventhly, Those are vain prayers, which are not both formed and matter'd according to the Will of God, (1 John 5. 14.) which are not grounded upon a just cause, and which are not directed to a right end. Besides all these I may add all cold Prayers, sleepy Prayers, slight spirited or heartless Prayers, meer formal Prayers, tongue-wording Prayers, which are not soul-working and self-affecting Prayers, are, to them who pray so, but vain

Prayers, or as the Text speaks, vanity.

These Rules must be observed in all our prayer-addresses to God, else prayer is vain, or vanity; and when the prayer it self is vain, the person praying hath no hearing: God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it. Consider that, Elihu doth not only say, God will not hear, but he adds, neither will the Almighty regard it. The doubling of the matter in higher Language intimates so nothing to us; and we may note this from it;

As the Prayers of evil men are vain, so they have not any, the left regard from God:

He will neither hear, nor regard. David faith (Pfal. 66.18.) If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my Prayer. God will not hear a David, a good man, as to that particular prayer, if he regard iniquity in his heart, that is, if he hold any, the least complyance or secret correspondence with any sin, yea, if he hath not repented of, and laboured to mortisse every known sin: Doubtless then he will not regard the prayers of evil men,

when they pray also with an evil mind. And when this, and other Scriptures fay, he doth neither hear nor regard them; there is more intended than expressed, even that he doth reject and abhor them, that they are a burden and an abomination to him. The Scripture is much in thewing how much God makes of holy prayers. For first, God hath not only promised to hear, but regard fuch prayets, (Pfal. 112. 17.) He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayers; that is, he highly prizeth and esteemeth them. Secondly, The Scripture telleth us, God delighteth to hear such prayers, they are sweet to him, they are the best musick in his ears; Let me hear thy voyce, for sweet is thy voyce (her prayer-voyce he means chiefly) faith Christ to his Spouse, (Cant. 2. 14.) Thirdly, The Scripture assureth us, that God looks upon or reckoneth prayer as an honour done to him, cis an eminent part of worship, 'cis the giving of him glory; certainly therefore (take prayer purely) God doth regard it very much; he will have regard to that which he hath promised regard to, he will have regard to that which is sweet and delightful to him, which is an honour and brings glory to him; therefore there must needs be a great matter in it, when he saith, He will not regard a prayer; fuch a prayer must needs be very vile, impure, and stark naught in it self, which he thus thrusteth from him, or cannot away with.

It must be consessed, that God sometimes defers to hear (that is, to answer) the prayers of those that call upon him in faith, and even their prayers who call upon him humbly and sincerely. Holy prayers are not alwayes presently answered, but holy prayers are never unregarded, never rejected. 'Fis never said in Scripture, God doth not regard the prayers of a godly man, God may set him stay long for the answer of his prayer, to try his faith, and patience; but he will not slight his prayer. As it is the duty of all men to pray, and the desire or delight of a godly man, (when his heart is in a right frame) to pray, so it is the priviledge of every godly man, that his prayer is heard and regarded. And as it is the sin of most wicked men that they pray not at all, (Psal. 14. 4. Fer. 10.25.) so it is the misery of all wicked men, that their prayers, though they make many and long prayers, are not heard, are not regarded. They are far from the grace and feare of God, who regard not to pray unto him; and they are as far from the

mercy and favour of God, whose prayers are not regarded. And if a man be upon such bad terms with God, that he is not regarded, when he is at his best work, his praying-work, O how little is such a one regarded when he is at his worst work, his sinningwork! If some men are not regarded, when they are praying to God, what are they when they are swearing, and blaspheming God, when they are causlessly vexing or oppressing their brethren? If some men are not regarded when they are praying, what are they when they are revelling and reviling! The Lords indignation breaketh out to the utmost against wicked men, when he tells them, the best of their duties, their prayer, is vanity, and though they cry much to him, he will not hear nor regard them. The Lord hath not faid to the feed of Jacob, seek ye me in vaine, (Isa. 45. 19.) that is, ye shall not seek me in vaine, no, as your prayers are honourable and acceptable unto me, so they shall be profitable and beneficial unto you; you that go forth weeping, bearing, and scattering this precious feed, shall doubtless come again and bring your sheaves with you, your prayers shall be returned with blesfings upon your souls, upon your bodies, upon your estates, upon your families, in which you live, as also upon the Nations and upon the Churches among whom you live. Thus the feed of Jacob have found and shall further find by the blessed experiences of all these bleffings, that God hath not said to them, Seek ye me in vaine. He hath only said of them who are vaine, your seekings of me are vaine in themselves, and will be vaine, fruitless, answerless unto you; for I the Lord will not hear vanity, neither will I the Almighty regard it.

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JOB, Chap. 35. Verf. 14.

Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him, yet Judgement is before him, therefore trust thou in

eft) judica coram eo O enpetta eum. Jun:

Here is a two-fold rendring or translation of this 14th verse; I First, Some connecting it with the former, and taking it in a dependance upon what Elibu had last affirmed concerning God, Multo minus si He heareth not vanity, neither doth the Almighty regard it, trandicas, noncon-state thus; Much less will be hear thee, if thou sayest thou doest templars isful not look to, or regard this; judge thy self therefore before him, and waite for him. As if Elihu should bring an argument from the less to the greater; God will not hear vanity, nor will the Almighty regard it, how much less will be hear thee, who fayest, (upon the matter) that thou regardest not him, or what he saith and doth. That word, which in the close of the 13th verse, we render regard, is the same with that in this 14th verse, rendered, see; as if the whole were a rebuke, or a conviction of Job for his stoutness, in not viewing and contemplating the power and prerogative of God as he ought, in laying his hand upon him; and therefore faith Elihu, if God will nor hear those that pray vainly, how much less will he regard thee, who feemest not to regard him? that is, not to humble thy felf before him as becomes thee to thy Soveraigne Lord: And thereupon Elihu gives him counsel in the close of the verle; Judge thy felf before him, and then waite for him, or trust him, as we render it. Mr Broughton seems to speak in his translation much to this sense, giving it thus; So, when thou sayest thou wilt not mark it, judge before him, and waite for him. As God will not regard vaine prayer, so when theu sayest to him, thou wilt not mark it, that is, attend to providences as thou oughtest, he wil not regard thee. There is a truth in this, and the Original word may fairly bear this translation; yet I shall not stay upon it; but rather take this Context as the beginning of a new argument, than as the inforcement of the former; understanding it so, the words have yer a reading different from ours.

Another modern translater disliking the former reading only in the first part of the verse, gives his own, thus; In this also (thou

half finned) Those words are supplyed to make up the sense, as being the bringing in of a surther charge against Job) In this also peccelti) gudd (thou hast sinned) that thou hast said, thou shalt not see him; judge divisit te non therefore thy self before him, and look for him. This is the matter committee. of his new charge, Thou hast said, thou shalt not see him, this is rum eum; Juthy sin. And having given him this charge, Elibu gives him countel according to this translation in the close of the verse, Judge pella cum. therefore thy felf before him, and look for him. We say in our tran- Pifc: flation, Judgement is before him, that is, before God; this translation faith, Judge thy felf before him; and the reason of it is because some take the word here as a Noune, others as a Veib of Aligui 177 170 the Imparative mood; Judge thy self before him, and then look to nomine expohim, or trust in him; that is, thou hall failed greatly, and finned nunt, Judicium in taking up such a Conclusion as this, that thou shalt not see God, alis pro 2007 (the sense of which I shall open when I come to our own tran- tivi modi; Juflation) therefore I advise thee to judge thy self thoroughly, and dica. Merc: humbly to acknowledge thy fault. This translation is much infifted upon, and because it hath a profitable sense, I shall note two or three poynts from the latter part of the verse, where it differs from ours, and then proceed to our own Translation. Fob being charged with fin for faying, that he should not fee God, is here advised to judge himself, Judge thy self, and look to, or trust in hims.

Hence Note; It is our duty to judge our selves.

Chap. 35.

And 'tis a great Gospel duty: The Apostle gives it in plain words, (I Cor. 11. 31.) If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged of the Lord. We are very apt to judge one another, but very backward to judge our selves. It is a great work to erect a Tribunal (as I may fay) in our own Souls and Consciences, to fit in Judgement upon our felves; which that we may do, we must do these three things. First, we must send Summons to our selves, we must cite our selves to our own Tribunal; for alwayes before Judgement, Summons must go our and be sent to the party offending: Here we are to fend Summons to our felves, that is, to call together all the powers of our fouls to appear in this Judgement, and answer what is or may be alledged against us. And when we have Summoned our felves, then secondly, we are to examine,

examine, search, and try our selve; (Lam. 3.41.) Let m fearch and try our wayes, and turn again unto the Lord. Thirdly, having tryed and examined our felves, before we can come to Judgement (that Judgement which is here intended) we must humble our selves under a Conviction of our own vileness and sinfulness, whether of our nature or of our actions, whether of our flate or of our way; for whereas there are two parts of Judgement, Absolution and Condemnation, we can never come to that part of Judgement, the judging of our felves, as persons worthy to be condemned by the Lord for our fins, unless we are first convinced of our fins. Now when we have summoned, examined, and convicted our felves, then we are ready to judge our felves, to judge our selves even with the judgement of condemnation, respecting what we have done, yet we should do it (with hopes of absolution) acting our faith upon the free grace and mercy of God through the satisfaction which Jesus Christ hath made for us.

Again, The scope of this counsel, or the reason why Elihu adviseth Job to judge himself, was to shew, that he had rashly judged of the wayes of God, because he had not duly judged him-

felf.

Hence Note; Self-judging, or judging our own doings, will preserve us from rash judging the doings and dealings of God with us.

We shall never think God deals harshly, or rigorously with us, if we do but enter into and pass a right judgement upon our own souls. As they that judge themselves shall not be judged of the Lord, (1 Cer. 11.31.) so, they that judge themselves will never judge the Lord; no, they will acquit and justifie the Lord under all his proceedings, even in his sorest and severest one:

Thus did Ezra in reference to those great and unparalel'd sufferings of the Jewes in the Babylonian warr and captivity, (Chap. 9. 13.) Thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve. And so did Daniel (Chap. 9.7.) O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day.

Further, Elibu concluded Job very much affected with, or highly conceited of himself, because he pleaded his own innocency or integrity so much, and was so desirous to come to a hearing, and have his matter tryed before God; and therefore saith he, Judge

thy felf.

Hence Note:

Self-judging will keep us from proud or high thoughts of our selves, of our own wayes or works, how good seever they are

Suppose our wayes and our works pure and good, as Jobs indeed were for the maine, (he was a man of the highest elevation in holiness and of greatest integrity) yet if we would thoroughly examine and judge our selves, consider our short comings in duty, our sinnings against duty, and the fins that cleave to our best duties, we should find our very innocency to be guilty, and our righteousness to be unrighteous; and furely such a discovery would lay us very low in our own thoughts, and go very far towards the subduing of that pride of our hearts, which often arises from the contemplation of our own wel-doing.

Lastly, Consider this counsel was given Job (according to this translation) with respect to that which follows; Judge thy

self, and trust in or wait for hims.

Hence Note;

We are never fit to trust, nor to wait upon God in any of his providences, till we judge our selves; or, Judging of our selves will dispose and prepare our hearts for trusting and resting upcathe power, goodness and mercy of God.

The more we judge and humble our felves, the readier hath God declared himself to help us in our extremities, (1 Pet. 5 6.) we also are then the readier to trust and wait on him, both because we then see more clearly what need we have to trust on him for help, and may have the more assurance of his help, while we trust him.

I shall now proceed to our own translation, which fairly accommodates the scope of Eliba's dealing with Job in this place,

Although thou sayest thou skalt not see him.

Elihu had reprehended two of Jobs sayings before in this Chapter; here he reprehends a third; Although thou sayest thir, thou shalt not see him; although thou sayest ir, either secretly in thy heart, (the sool saith in his heart there is no God) or although thou sayest it with thy mouth, and hast openly declared thy despayre of seeing him. Some patsages in the discourse of Job

do more than incimate and imply, that he had faid, he should not fee God. And we may conceive that Elihu aimeth at that passage specially (Chap. 23. 8, 9.) where Job seems to say this thing; Behold, I go forward, but he is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him. Now, Elihu gives answer in this 14th verse, shewing, that although God would not give him a prefent hearing upon his importunate call for it, yet he might rest assured, that God would do him justice, and therefore adviseth him quietly to rest upon him. Although then sayest thou shalt not see him, or canst not see him, yet Judgement is before him, therefore trust thou in him. In that 23d Chapter, Job made a fad complaint, that though he much solicited and defired to see God (in what sense I shall open prefently) yet he could not be admitted, he could not find him, nor come near him ; I (faith he) cannot perceive him, I cannot behold him, I cannot see him; we have all these words negatively expressed there; as here, Although thou sayest thou shalt not see, (or

contemplate) him.

There is a two-fold fight of God; First, immediate, or in himfelf; and thus God is seen only by himself, and of himself, to all others he is invisible, No eye hath seen him, nor can see him, (1 Tim. 6. 16.) The Lord told Moses, No man can see my face and live; that is, no man can see me immediately, no man can have any ocular fight of me, as we see those things that are before us; God is a Spirit, and therefore invisible. Fob doth not complain, (in this fense) that he could not see God, for he knew God was not to be feen, nor did he wait for any fuch corporal view or fight or presence of God. Secondly, There is a mediate fight of God, and that by a three-fold means; First, in or by his Word; for that is one glass wherein we behold him. Secondly, there is a fight of God in his Works, they are another glass wherein we see and hehold him; and those works are two fold; First, the works of Creation, in them we may see or contemplate God all the world over, in his power, wisdome, and goodness, (Rom, 1. 19, 20.) Secondly, his works of providence, ordering and difpoling all the motions of the creatures, as himself pleaseth, how much soever any of their motions are displeasing unto him. Thus we may see God in his works, that is, it is seen by his works, not

only that he is, but what he is, or that he is Eternal and Infinite, that he is Most Wise and Omnipotent, that he can do all things, or that nothing is too hard for him, he having brought all things out of nothing. There is a Third Medium or Means by which we may fee God, and that is, His Son, our Lord Tefus Christ, (2 Cor. 4. 6.) The light of the knowledge of the Glory of God shineth to us in the face of Jesus Christ; that is, in the person of Christ, God-Man, we may behold the glorious Grace of God unto poor finful lost man. All the beams of Divine Love are collected in, and issue forth from the face of Jesus Christ. He that would see how good, how gracious, how merciful the Lord is to sinners, let him by an eye of Faith, or spiritual Contemplation look Christ in the face, and there he shall find the expresse Characters of all that Glory. By these Means, or mediately in all these wayes, God may be seen, and is seen by his People. This threefold fight of God, is the fight of Faith; it is by Faith that we see him in his Word; it is by Faith that we see him in his Works; it is by Faith that we see him in his Son. Thus we are to understand that of the Apostle concerning Moses, (Heb. 11.27.) He endured, as seeing him that is invisible.

We may also distinguish of this fight of God two ways; there is a fight of God first in grace, which is, though a true and real, yer an imperfect fight, of which the Apostle speaks (1 Cor. 13. 12.) Now we see as in a glasse, darkly. Secondly, There is a seeing of God in glory, which is there called A seeing of him face to face: Of that fight Christ speaks (Math. 5.8.) Bleffed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. As they now see him in the dispensations of his Grace here, so they shall see him in the givings forth, or manifestations of his Glory to them hereaster. Now when fob complainers, or Elihu brings him in complaining, That he should not see God, we are not to understand it, as if he despaired of ever seeing God in Glory, or had concluded in his own breaft, that he should never see him in his ways of Grace, or professed that at present he had no sight at all of God by faith; for though I conceive Jobs fight of God by faith, or in the actings of his Crace, at that time was very low and dim, yet some fight he had of him by faith, enough I am fure to preferve and keep him from making any such negative Conclusion against himself, that he should not see God in Glory. But that which he chiefly intendeth CONTROL

se est, pro astare coram alicausa siducia, ita ut non dedicem oculos Intrepide dimdeat. Buld.

The Intendit tendeth, is, that he feared he should not come to see him in such oculos. Verbum a day and way of tryal, as he before defired in the 23d Chapter, (verf. 8, 9.) or that God would never manifest himself so cleerly in his Providences and dealings about his case in this world, quo cum magna as might acquit him, and bring the matter in question to a full state, that all might take notice of his wronged integrity. Job was under a great Cloud at that time, and feared that God had vultusfed elato covered himself with a Cloud also, (as the Church bemoaned her capite ad inter- self, Lam. 3. 44.) and therefore said, I shall not see him; I shall not see him as a Judge acquitting me, and giving sentence for Spicientemasju- me. Some conceive, that the Hebrew word rendred Seeing, refers to a person brought before a Judge, for the tryal of his gere quis au- Cause, and standing before him, not as a guilty Malefactor, with a heavy heart, and a down-look, but as a man conscious of his own innocency, with much honest boldnesse, and well tempered confidence. The words following intimate such a sence of that word, Although thon sayest, thou shalt not see him, (that is, be brought to tryal,) yet Judgement is before him, he will certainly try thee. This I take to be the most proper Explication of these words, Although thou sayest, thou shalt not see him.

Job spake this as the worst of his case, as that which was a greater grief and mifery to him, than all his other miferies and griefs, that God would not fet him in a clear light before others, or that himself should not have a clear light from God concern-

ing his condition.

Hence Note: The fight of God, or Gods discoverie of himself in any dark case, is very sweet to an upright and gracious soul.

Tob had begged for this once and again, though possibly, as Elihu would here convince him, he was something too forward in it, and did not enough reflect upon himself; yet as he had often desiredir, so doubtlesse it was exceeding much upon his heart, that he might have a clear discovery from God. The Apostle, in somewhat a like case, in being aspersed in his Ministry, saith, we are made manifest unto God, (2 Cor. 5.11.) It pleased him that he was manifest unto God: But when God is pleased to manifest himself unto a Soul, how pleasing is that? When we can say, now we see God, we see him clearing up our way, clearing up our integrity,

tegrity, clearing up our state, how farisfying is it! And as it is most sweet and satisfying to see God clearing up our state to our own consciences, so it is exceeding sweet to see him clearing up our actions to the eye of the world; as the Apolile spake in the same place, We are manifest unto God, and I crust also are made manifest in your consciences. As if he had said, we hope, God hath discovered us to you, and your consciences do also attest with us and for us what we are. Light is sweet (the light of the air, saith Solomon) and it is pleasant to behold the Sun, the Sun in the firmament; how much more sweet is the light of divine favour, as also of our own faithfulness, thining into our hearts, and upon our wayes, so that we are able to say, now we see the Lord graciously rolling away our reproach, owning us, and taking our part before and against all the opposing contradicting world!

Secondly, Note; A godly man may lose the fight and present apprehension of God, as owning of him, and taking care of him.

It is so often as to our spiritual estate, and it may be so, as to our outward state; hence those many complainings which we find in the Psalmes, and those many deprecations, as to the hiding of Gods face; David would faine have kept fight of God, O how he defired to see him, to behold him! yet many times he did not, neither as to the affurance of his spiritual interest, nor as to the Sape deus ocomforts of his outward condition, (Pfal. 13. 1.) (Pfal. 27.9.) Rendit facient (Pfal. 30. 7.) As God sometimes theweth himself in a kind of fuam, sed non cloud or darkness, in fire and tempest, which is very terrible to the ita ut supiunt foul; so he at other times discovers himself only a little, or gives bomines, i-but a glimple of himself clearly to stir up further desires of seeing debq; non vibut a glimple of himself clearly, to stir up further desi es of seeing dent se videre, him, and to make us weary of all we fee in this world: in there ut is a dicare. cases we may be said not to see God when we see him. Many Coc. godly men are in such a dark condition, that they think God hideth his face from them in displeasure, when indeed he doth not, but only tryeth them, to see what is in them, and whether they will chey him in hope and parience, and keep close to him in holy walkings, even when he feemeth to depart from them, and withdraw his presence.

Thirdly, Observe;

Good men are apt sometimes to make over-fad conclusions against thems elves,

As evil men are apt to make over-good conclusions for themfelves, they doubt not but they shall see and enjoy God. O what prefumptuous thoughts have men, and what peremptory, though groundless, conclusions do they make for themselves upon false and rotten premises! they will say, they know God, and are known of God, they fee God, and enjoy God, when they know not the meaning, much less have tasted the comfort of knowing God, or of being known by him, of feeing God, or of enjoying him. These mysterious experiences are not every man's meat, nor every man's matters, who makes title to the knowledge of God. The Apostle faith expresly, (1 John 2. 4.) He that faith I know him, and keepeth not his Commandements, is a liar, and the truth is not in bim. And again, (Chap. 3. 6.) Whoseever sinneth (that is, loves and fives in fin) hath not feen him, neither known him. Yet how many are there, far from keeping the Commandements of God, far from a holy life, yea far from a holy state, so far from such a holy life, as of which it may be said in a Gospel sense, that they fin nor, that indeed they do nothing else but fin! yet these are apt to conclude, they see God, they see him by faith, they know him, they doubt not but he is their Cod. Now as many carnal men are apt to make false conclusions to themselves of an interest in God, when there is no fuch matter, kindling a fire, and compatting themselves about with their own sparks, as the Prophet speaks, (Isa. 50. 11.) that is, with vaine conceits of their own blowing up, that all is well with them; when all that they, who do fo, thall have at Gods hand, is, they shall lie down in forrow. So on the other fide, godly men often times make fad conclusions against themselves, they say (as Job in the Text) they shall not fee him; who though (as was shewed in opening the Text) he did not conclude against his fight of God by grace, or that he had no fight of him by faith, yet he had not a comfortable fight as to his present enjoyment, and he doubted whether ever he should in this world. Jonah made such a conclusion (Chap. 2. 4.) Then I faid . I am cast out of thy fight. As Hezekiah said in his fickness, (Isa. 38. 11.) I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the Land of the living; that is, I shall die, and shall no more go into the house of the Lord, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple, which was the one thing, even the only thing (in this life) which David defired and resolved to seek after, (Pfal. 27.

(Pfal. 27. 4.) So many, while they live, are apt to make fuch conclusions, they shall see God no more, they shall not see him as long as they live, they are afraid they shall never have comfort more, nor peace more, while they are in this world, while they are on this fide heaven; yet whether ever they shall come to see him in heaven, is their greatest, their saddest, their most heartdisquieting and heart-breaking doubt and feare. And indeed as we cannot see God, untill he gives us eyes, so we cannot believe we shall see him, untill he gives us hearts. Many times his dealings, both as to outward terrible providences, and inward terrors, are so dark, that we can see nothing but darkness, nor say any thing but as Job is here charged to say, that we shall not see him. Yea, God doth often hide himself from his people on purpose to try whether they will trust him and wait upon him under such withdrawings, for salvation, whether temporal or evernal, (Ifal. 45. 15. Thou art a God that hidest thy self, O God of Ifrael, the Saviour: Let us therefore take heed of faying, he will be for ever hidden, or that we shall never see, nor behold him as a Saviour; say not it is so dark with us, that as now we see no light, so our night shall never have a morning.

Fourthly, From these words, Although thou sayest thou shalt

not see bim, Note,

A good man is apt to give his heart and tongue too much liberty.

We should watch our hearts, to keep out or cast out vaine thoughts, we should strangle distrustful and unbelieving thoughts in the very birth, that so our tongues may never bring them forth, nor publish them to the offence of others. Thou hast said, thou shall not see him. But when our unbridled tongues have run at randome, and spoken what is not right, yet God will do what is right, as the next words assure us.

Yet Judgment is before him.

These words plainly intimate, that Jobs scope, when he said he should not see God, was, that he should not see him as a Judge clearing up his cause, or appearing to vindicate the wrong done him, and to do him right. As if Elihu had said, Whatever thy opinion is concerning God, that he will never appear in thy cause to do thee right, yet know this (O Job) Judgement is before him,

and therefore I advite thee, be thou better perswaded both of his presence with thee, and of his providence over thee. The word rendred fudgement, is that from which one of the Patriarks had his name, and it is a great elegancy, (Gen. 49. 16.) Dan shall Judge his people. The proper name Dan, is the same with the

Verb which follows, shall Fudge.

When Judgement is faid to be before the Lord, it may be taken three wayes, (so we find it in the Scripture) First, we read there o' Ju gement as it is opposed to mercy. These terrible and dreadful Judgements of God are every where spoken of. Secondly, Judgement is opposed to imprudence and want of understanding or discretion; Judgement is a wife and clear fight or apprehenfion of things; as we say such a one is a Judicious man, or a man of a great Judgement. Thirdly, Judgement is opposed to injustice or to unrighteousness; thus we do judgement and justice. Many have a great flock of judgement or understanding, who yet will do little judgment, that is, little justice, they have a right understanding of things, yet will do little or nothing right. Here, when it is faid, Judgment is before him, we are to understand it in the two latter senses; so though it be a great truth that judgment as opposed romercy, is before the Lord, And he shall have judgement without mercy, that bath shewed no mercy, though (as the Apostle adds in the same place James 2. 13.) Mercy rejoyceth (or glorieth) against Judgement; The Lord hath judgements, all manner of judgements about him, yet that notion of judgement doth not belong to this place, but the two latter. Judgement is before him; that is, he is a God of infinite understanding and wildome, he feeth every thing to the utmost, he goes to the bottome of every mans case, yea, to the very bottome of every mans heart; he sees every action quite through, and every person: And as he knows the truth of every mans cause and case, so he will do every man right, according to the merit of his cause and case. Tustice and Judgement are the habitation of his throne, while clouds and darkness are round about him, (Psal. 97. 2.) that is, though present dispensations are obscure (as in Jobs case) yet both the procedure and dealings of God, as also the is we or determination which he gives in every matter, is just and righteous to all men, as well as gracious and comfortable to good and upright-hearted men. Thus, Judgement, or this judgement is alwayes before him, that is, he hath a clear fight of it, and he is ready to do it.

Hence Note, First,
God hath a right and clear apprehension of all persons and actions;

His understanding is infinite. The Lord is (25 Hannah spake in her Thanksgiving-Song, 1 Sam. 2. 3.) a Ged of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed; That is, he knoweth them exactly, to a grain, as we do the weight of those things which we have laid in an even Balance. It is required of Judges (in that advice which Fethro gave to Moses, Exod. 18. 21.) That they should be able men, that is, (not so much men of able purses, as) of able parts, men of able judgement, and of more than common understanding, even such as were able to look through every mans Cause that came before them. Such is the ability of the Lords understanding to the full, he is Omniscient, He is light, and in him is no darkneffe at all. And as in him there is no darkneffe, fo nothing is dark to him; the most intricate and knotty Case, the most ravel'd and vext Cause that ever was, is plain and evident before his eyes, with whom we have to do, and who hath to do with us. Judgement is before him; neither is there any Judgement before any other in comparison of him; God hath so much light, that Men and Angels are to him but darknesse; God seeth so much, that all others may be faid not to see, or to be stark blind; even those Judges may be called blind, who are not blinded, we may fay they have no eyes, whose eyes are not put out with gifts, compared with God. How blind then are those judges, who are blinded? and whose eyes are put out, either by prejudice or pasfion, by hopes or fears! it cannot be, but Judgement must be before God, because as he cleerly sees, and fully understands whatsoever comes before him, so nothing can divert or biass him from doing every man right, according to his fight and understanding. Judgement is before him.

Hence Note, Secondly,

God will do right to every man, as fure as he knows the right of
every man.

There are many who know what is right, who know whose Cause is right, yet will not do right. But as sure as God knows every mans right, so certainly he will do him right. Abraham pleaded

pleaded thus with God, Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right? (Gen. 18. 25.) Certainly, he will do right, he cannot but do right; Judgement is before him. The Scripture is express, He will remard every man (and award to every man) according to his works. Every man shall have as he is; for (as the Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. 4. 6.) He shall bring to light the hidden things of darknesse, and make manifest the counsels of the heart; and then shall every man have praise of God; that is, every man shall have it, who is sit for it; every man shall have praise, who is (as we say) praise-worthy, how much soever he hath been dispraised, slurr'd in his credic, unworthily dealt with, and accused in this world. God will not hold, or detain the truth of men in unrighteousnesse, though men hold both the truth of God, and the truth of men (the truth of their Causes) in unrighteousnesse.

Further, That Particle which we render yet, gives us this

Note

God is never a whit the lesse Righteous, because it doth not appear to us that he is so.

Although thou sayest, thou shalt not see him, yet Judgement is before him. The wayes of God are often secret, but none of them are unjust; Judgement is before him, even then, when we think ic is farthest off from him. Therefore, if we will give God the glory of governing the world, and of ordering all our personal conditions, we must not measure him by the things we see, or which appear; for we cannot see the measure of his Judgement by what appears, that which appears to us is not his Judgement, fomething else is his judgement, and he in the close will make his judgement clear to all men, he will make it appear that judgment is his, though what his judgement is doth not appear. The mis-apprehensions, or mis-constructions of men do not at all retard or stop the righteousnesse of God, as the Apostle speaks in another case (Rom. 3. 3.) Shall the unbelief of man make the Faith of God (that is, the Faithfulnelle of God) of none effect? God forbid; God will be Faithful and True, though all the world be Unbelievers and Lyars. Now, as the unbelief of man cannot make the Faithfulnesse of God of none effect; so our not believing that Judgement proceeds, or our faying it is delayed, does

not

not at all take off God from righteousnesse in doing Judgement; he is doing Judgement righteously, whatever apprehensions men have of his doings. Judgement is before him;

Therefore trust thou in him.

Elihu according to the first reading of the former words, exhorts Job to Repentance, Judge thy self; and here he exhorts him to Faith, Trust thou in him. Judgement is before him, therefore trust thou in him, or wait and hope in him; for seeing God is a Just and Righteous Judge, he will not neglect or slight the Cause of any of his People; therefore they have all the reason in the world to trust in him, and wait upon him. It is unbelief which

makes haste, Faith is content to wait and farry.

The Original word hath several significations. First, More general, to grieve, or be in pain and trouble. Secondly, In special, Notat 1. Doleto bring forth, or the pain of a woman intravel to bring forth; re. 3. Mancre, there is much pain in that travel. Thus some translate here, Perseverare. Wait for him, as a woman in travel waits for deliverance, Thirdly, 4. Sperare. As it fignifies to have pain, and to have that pain in bringing forth children, so to attend, to wait, to stay quietly, and expect. Rest phorem, quia in the Lord (saith David, Psal. 37.7.) and wait patiently for futur mgauhim. We may give the reason of this signification from that allu- dium cum dosion. The woman though she be in pain, yet she patiently bears it, lore parturit. because she hath hope a man shall be born into the world, (John Coc. 16. 21.) A woman in that pain, hath not only patience but comfort under it, because she hopes a child shall shortly be born, who will recompense all her forrows, in bearing and bringing him forth into the world. That's the force of this word, Trust in him. Thou art in pain, in trouble, in travel for the present, yet thou shalt have a blessed deliverance, thou shalt certainly si that it is not in vain to trust upon God. Thus Elihu adviseth Job to such a patience as a woman in travel with child hath, who bears her pains comfortably, being refreshed and supported with an affurance, and fore-fense of that joy which the shall have, being once delivered. Trust thou in him. I have in some other places of this Book, met with this Point of trusting in God, Fob said in the 13th Chapter of this Book, (verf. 15.) Though he flay me, yet will I trust in him; And therefore I shall not stay to open that general duty, or the exercise of that Grace, which here Elihu exhorts

exhorts Fob to, Trusting in, or waiting upon God. Only from the Connexion,

Note;

First, It is our duty to wait and trust upon God;

And 'tis fuch a duty as will keep us close to all other duties; a mind staid on God, is a mind fit to move about any good work whatsoever, which God calleth us unto.

Secondly, Put all together, Thou sayest, thou shalt not see him, (thou art doubtful whether ever things will mend,) yet Judgement is before him, therefore trust.

Hence Note;

When things are not clear to us, when we have no light about what God is doing, or what he will do, yet it is our duty to trust and wait upon God.

We must wait upon God, and trust in him, though we do not fee him, yea, though we cannot see him, for Judgement is before him. That of the Prophet (Isa. 50. 10.) is a clear proof of this duty, (and some expound this Scripture specially respecting outward dark providences, as others of inward darkness, or darkness of spirit) Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voyce of his servants, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light (as Tob faith here, I shall not see him) What shall a poor benighted soul do in that case? The answer or advice followeth) Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. How dark soever our condition is, yet it is our duty to trust upon God; and if once we are enabled to give God the glory due to his name, in confessing, that Judgement is before him, we shall readily trust upon him, to order all things for us, though all things feem out of order, even to amazement; though we see heaven and earth, as it were, confounded, yet we shall readily trust upon him, because we believe, that even then Judgement is before him. How foon can he turn our darkness into light, who in the first Creation, when all lay together in a confused heap, and darkness over all, brought forth light and set all in order? The Lord can command light out of darkness, good out of evil, order out of confusion, and he can do all this eafily, and at an instant; therefore whatever the appearances of things are, let not us judge according to appearance, but hope

and wair, and flick to what God hath promised. Though providences appear cross to promises and propheties, yet they never frustrate either. Let us also be sure to stick to the commandements of God, for we may restassured, God will stick to his pron iles. To keep Commandements is our work, to keep promites is Gods work; though we fayle much in our work, God will not fayle at all in his work: To believe this, is the highest and truest work of faith. But if we are faithful in our work, the keeping of Commandements, we have a further evidence, that God will be faithful in his work, the keeping or fulfilling of promises, (a great part, the most spiritual part of Gods fulfilling promites, being his enabling of us to keep Commandements) and then we shall be able to fay, not only in faith, but from experience, that Judgement is before him. And untill we come to this conclusion of faith in dark times, when we cannot see him, the soul never sics down in rest. Nothing fixes the soul but trust in God; we are unquiet, yea we boyle with unquietness, and toss as the angry Sea with the windes, till we trust fully upon God, upon his wisdome and power, upon his goodness and faithfulness, and can say, let him do as feems good in his eyes; we know he is and will be good to Ifrael, even to such as are of a clean heart. When we can once stay our minds on God, we are quier; but when we must bring God to our mind, and must have God go our pace, or come at our time, and work in our way, (none of which he will do, what a do foever we make to have it so) O how restless and troubled are we, even like the troubled Sea when it cannot rest! And O how much of this restless trouble discovers it self in the minds of many (that I say not the most of) men, and all because they cannot trust God when they do not see him, or because when they do not see him (which was Jobs fayling) they say, ther shall not see him. If matters come not to pass according to their platforme, and model, or hit not the dates and dayes, the times and seasons which they have fixt in their unscriptural Kalender, or by a mistake of the Scripture Kalendar, they are ready to fay, they shall not see him, their hopes are as the giving up of the ghost, that is, they give all for lost, and past recovery. Mary trust God (as they do some men) no farther than they see him; they are the worst and coursest fort of men, whom we trust no otherwise. How dishonourable then, how infinitely below God is such a truff? Eliba

Elihu would have Job (and so should we) trust God, though he could not see him, and said he should not. Thou hast said, thou shalt not see him, yet trust in him.

Lastly, From the illative particle, therefore (that is, because

Judgement is before him) trust thou in him.

Note hence;
The consideration of the Righteousness and Justice of God, is a mighty argument to provoke us to trust him, and wait upon him.

Trust is not every bodyes due; some (as we speak proverbially) are to be trusted no farther than a man can throw a Milstone, that is, they are not to be trusted at all: Trust (I say) is not every bodyes due: but to trust God is every bodyes duty, yea and interest too, for he is cloathed as much with righteousness and justice, as he is with strength and power. Will you not trust an honest man, will you not trust a wife man? We can come to a height of confidence in man fometimes, if we think him a man of judgement and wisdome, of honesty and faithfulness, we can trust all we have in such a mans hand; how much more should we say to God, seeing Judgement is before him, therefore will me trust in him. We have an eminent Scripture, urging this duty upon this ground. (Ifa. 30. 18.) The Lord is a God of Judgement (Judgement is there taken in the same notion as here in the Text, he is a wise and a just God, the Lord is a God of judgement, what followeth) Bleffed are they that mait for him. There can be nothing said, more urging, more encouraging to wait and trust on God, to do us right, then this, He is a God of Judgement, arighteous God, Judgement is before him.

Thus far of the good counsel which Elibu gave Job in this his dark and deserted state; and counsel it was worthy to be embraced with both armes, and with an open breast; and that Job had need of it, he shews in the next words, while he tells Job and us, it was not so with him yet, as appeared by the sad hand of

God upon him, and his own distemper under it.

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JOB, Chap. 35. Vers. 15, 16.

15. But now because it is not so, he bath visited in his anger, yet he knoweth it not in great extremity.

16. Therefore doth fob open his month in vain:

he multiplieth words without knowledge.

IN the close of the former verse, Elihu called upon and exhorted Job to a patient reliance, and trust on God, Judgement is before him, therefore trust thou in him; here in the 15th verse he shews, that, the reason why God visited him so sorely, and yet continued his vifitation upon him, was because he did not, as he ought, patiently trust in, and rely upon him.

There are several readings of this verse, but I shall only mention one, besides our own, and having stayed a little about that, go on to the explication of the Text, as it lyes in order before

us. Some render thus;

But know now, his anger bath vifited thee but a little, (Hebr: Nuncourem cinothing) neither bath he made any great inquisition. The sense of to quod pauluthe verse, according to this rendring, riseth thus; As if Elihu had lumte visitavit said, God bath dealt with thee O Job, far better than thou hast dealt irripsius, neque with him, or then thou hast cause to expect; he hath not laid his hand tum admodum. so heavy upon thee, as thy iniquity bath deserved, and yet thou com- Merc: plainest much of his severity; whereas indeed he hath not strictly in- Scito peremiquired into the multisude of thy fins, which if he had done, he would guum effe, quo certainly have brought upon thee, a greater multitude of afflictions, pledit, nisi lehe would have afflicted thee much more: Then art too well used to citer in te incomplain thus; That's the summe of this rendring, which the lear- qui ere miluis ned Authors of it make fairly out from the Original, to whom I Jet. Bez: refer the Reader, and shall only offer two notes from it, for in-Aruction.

First, The screek afflictions that fall upon sinners in this life are little or nothing to what God might lay upon them.

There is no condition here actually so bad, but possibly it might be worse; though the darkness of night be upon us, yet it may be

Et nune quia nibil eft quod ristiavit ira

ejm. Druf:

darker with us; God can make a night so dark, that the former darkness may be called light; God can add so much bitterness to that which is very bitter, to much weight to that burden of affliction, which is already very heavy, that the former bitter may be called sweet, and that former weight of affliction, light. Are any poor, fick, or pained, God can make them poorer, ficker, and fo encrease their paine, that former poverty, sickness, paine, may go for riches, health, and ease. And as present sufferings of one kind or other, are but little to what they may be, so they are but little to what we have deferved they should be: The least mercy is more than we deserve, and the greatest affliction is lets than we deferve. He hath vifited thee little or nothing, (so the word is) laith Elihu, according to this reading of the Text. The Lord hath not only not visited thee too much, O Job, but he may be said, not to have visited thee at all, or the All of thy visita ion is nothing to that which the Lord could have brought upon thee. David gives a general affertion near this concerning the dealings of the Lord, in his angry dispensations, (Psal. 103. 10.) He hath not dealt with us after our fins, nor remarded us according to our iniquities; that is, our fins and our iniquities might have born out the Justice of God in laying heavier evils and troubles upon us, than yet he hath done. Sinners never have their full punishment till they come to hell. As the sweetest joyes and strongest-consolations which the godly find and feel on earth, are only tasts and firstfruits of that they shall have in heaven; so all the forrows and furferings of the wicked in this world, are but tafts, light touches and beginnings of forrow, compared with the pains and forrows of the next world, where finners shall be payd their wages in

Veruma; visigiftration in pec- on after them; catores animadversionem inquisitionem punitioni conjunflum importat.

Secondly, From the latter part of the verse thus translated, amdi de recen- Neither bath he made any great inquisition; that is, he hath not Sendi vel cog- taken first knowledge of thy fins, though a multitude, though buminhoclose even past number; though there be abundance of them, and they judich vel ma- abounding in sinsulness, yet he hath not made any great inquisiti-

Hence Note:

The Lord doth not severely mark the sins of his people, no not the multitude nor magnitude of their fins, to punish them.

(Pfat.

Chap. 35.

(Pfal. 130. 3.) If thou Lord shouldest mark inquity, implying that the Lord doth nor mark (in the fense here intended) if thou (houldest mark iniquity) O Lord, who shall stand? The word in that Pfalm rendred to mark, notes, first, to warch, or to observe with exactest diligence, and is therefore in the Noun rendred 2 watch Tower, upon which a man is placed to take observation of all things that are done, and of all persons that passe by, or epproach and come neer. A Watch-man placed upon a high-Tower, is bound industriously and critically to observe all Passengers, and passages, all that his eye can reach: So saith the Text, If thou shouldest mark as a Watch-man, and eye with rigour every thing that passeth from us, Who could stand? That is, make good his Cause in the day of his judgement and tryal before thee? Secondly, The word fignifieth to keep in mind, to lay up, to have, as it were, a store and stock, a memorial or record, of such and fuch things by us. In that notion it is faid (Gen. 37.11.) Tolephs Brethren envied him, but his Father observed the saying; he marked what Toseph spake about his Dreams, he laid it up, and did not let it passe away as a D eam, or as a vision of the night: Thus in the Psalm, If the Lord should mark iniquity, if he should treafure up our fins in his memory, and keep them by him, who were able to stand when accounted with? The Lord in a way of grace, feeth as if he saw nor, and winks at us oftentimes when we do amis, as he is said to have done at those times, the times of ignorance, when not only many things, but even every thing was done amiss, and out of order, in the dark Gentile world, before the approach of Gospellight, (Ads 17. 30.) And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but new commandeth all men every where to repent. That is, the Lord took little notice of those untaught times, in comparison of that strict notice which he will take of these times; concerning which, he gave command to his Apostles, Go and teach all Nations; and yet the strictest notice which he takes of our fins in these times, is but little to what he might.

So much from that Translation of the Text; our own runs thus.

Vers. 15. But now because it is not so, he hath visited in his anger; yet he knowesh it not in great extremity.

שמר

We must expound this Verse in Connexion with the latter part of the former.

But now because it is not so.

What is not so? what is missing? what is wanting? What had Job done amis? or what had he mist to do? Elihu seems to answer, he hath mist the doing of that duty to which he was moved in the close of the fore-going Verse, expressed in those words, Trust thou in him, or wait upon him : But now because it is not fo; that is, Because thou dost not put forth such acts of holy confidence, and patient waiting upon God as thou oughtest, and as I admonished thee to do, therefore God is engaged, and even compelled to treat thee thus roughly and severely, He hath visited in his anger. As if he had said, Though thou hast professed a trust in God, yet thou dost not trust in him fully, as becomes thee, yea, thou feemest sometimes (as a man forlorn) to cast upthy hopes; therefore, because thou dost not trust in him, because it is not so as I have exhorted and directed thee, the Lord hath visited in anger. Mr. Braughton renders, But now for miffing, his anger doth visit. For miffing; that is, for missing of duty, or for not acting up to duty, for not trusting fully in the Lord, the Lord hath visited thee in his anger. This sense is obvious and commodious according to our reading. But now because it is not

Homo tentatur et in esemon vocatur ut probetur ejus. spes et patientia ; quandoquidem igitur illa non extat, invafit ira ejus, qua etiam in in quos diligitet Silves vult

He hath vifited in his anger, or strictly, his anger bath vifited;

That is, God hath heavily afflicted thee. God is far from all passion and perturbation of mind, only he is said to be angry, or to visit in his anger, when he doth that which anger produceth among men; when he casts down and punisheth, when he lays his odit, et amoli- hand forely upon the Creature, then he is faid to be angry, then sur peccasem, His anger hath visited. The word notes quick breathing in the Nostrils; anger appears, or vents it self there; as it is said of Paul, when Saul (Acts 9. 1.) And Saul yet breathing out threatmanime. Coe. nings, and flaughter against the Disciples of the Lord, went unto the High Priest. You might see anger, as it were foam, yea flame out of his mouth, and evaporate at his nostrils. Thus faith Elihu, Because it is not fo, his anger

Hath

Hath visited.

To visit, is properly to go to, and see any person whom we respect and love; thus we visit friends in civility and courtesse. Secondly, To visit is an act of pity and mercy; and thus we visit the lick, the widdow, and the fatherlesse (James 1.27.) Pure Religion, and undefiled before God, and the Father, is to visit the fatherlesse and widows in their affliction; that is, to go to them in pity, either for the supply of their wants by our purse, or for the comforting of their hearts by our counsel. Thirdly, We visit in care, as well as in kindnesse, that is, when we go to our Families or Flocks, or places of charge, wheresoever they are, and see that, or whether, all things are well and right with them, or well, and rightly done towards them, according to the sules that such persons under our charge ought to act, and live by:

Thus in Colledges and Hospitals, there is a visitation of care, to make enquiry of persons intrust, about persons and things un-

der their trust.

To the Point in hand; there is a twofold visitation of God.

First, He visits in love and mercy, (Ruth. 1.6.) Then she (that is Naomi) arose with her Daughter in Law, that she might return from the Countrey of Moab, for she had heard in the Countrey of Moab, how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread. That is, God had shewed them kindnesse and mercy in relieving them from that devouring famine. Again, (Gen. 21.

6.) And the Lord visited Sarah, as he had said; that is, he gave her the promised mercy of a Son. Once more, (Luke 1.68.) Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited, and redeemed his People; and that's a blessed visitation indeed, which beings redemption. Thus the Scripture often speaks of Gods visitation in mercy.

Secondly, There is a visitation of God in anger, weath and judgement. The Law saith (Exod. 20. 4, 5.) Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven Image, &c. Thou shalt not bow down thy self to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the inequity of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate me: That is punishing the inequity of the Fathers upon the Children, these Children continuing in their Fathers ways, to do sinfully; such Children continuing in their Fathers ways, to do sinfully; such Children continuing in their Fathers ways, to do sinfully; such Children continuing in their Fathers ways, to do sinfully;

dren as take up the evil examples, or tread in the bad steps of their fore-Fathers, shall suffer for it. The Prophet at once upbraided the impudent Jews, and threatned them in this Language, (fer. 6. 15.) Were they ashamed when they had committed abominations? nay, they were not ashamed, neither could they blush; therefore they shall fall among them that fall at the time that I visit them, they shall be cast down, saith the Lord. Again, 1 sa. 26. 14.) Therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them. There is a vilitation for destruction, that's a sad visitation. In this sense we read of a time of visitation (fer. 8.12. fer. 10. 15.) We read of days of visitation, (Hosea 9. 7.) The dayes of visitation are come, the dayes of recompence are come. We read also of a year of visitation, (fer. 23.12.) For I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitation, saith the Lord. As also (Chap. 11, 23.) I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, even the year of their visitation. This is the visitation here spoken of; it is a time, a day, a year of fore vilitation with thee, O Job. Because it is not so, he hath visited in his anger.

Hence Note, First,

God expects the work of Faith and Patience, when his assisting

hand is upon us.

Faith hath much work to do at all times, but most in times of affliction. There is also a use of two sorts of patience in our best dayes the patience of labouring in Gods work, and the patience of waiting for the reward of our work, after all our labours: But in sad dayes the Lord expects we should exercise both patience in suffering, and in waiting for deliverance out of all our sufferings; then tis that both Faith and Patience, trusting and waiting must have their perfect work.

Secondly Note;
When the Lord doth not find or see, as he expects, the work of
Faith and Patience in a time of affliction, he will afflict more

and more until he finds or works it.

This is it which Elibu saith in the Text, Because it is not so, he hath visited in his anger. Job was sorely afflicted before, but now he is visited in anger, because he did not manifest such trust in God as he expected in that condition. As when the wicked repent

repent not of their fins under the punishing hand of God, he will punish them more and more, even seven times more for their fins, (Levit. 26. 41.) Solwhen good men act not their Graces, believe not, trust not under the affl ching hand of God, he usually afflicts them more and more, gives them foarer stripes, and layeth yet heavier burdens on them. When God milleth what he lock'd for, we may quickly feel whar we looked not for. Mr. Braughtons Translation speaks the Point fully, But now for miffing, his anger doth visit. Min seldome misseth trouble from God, when God milleth duty from man; and 'tis a me cy that he doth not: 'tis mans mercy when God minds him of his deficiencies in duty, though by a fmart visiting rod. Thus the Lord spike of Davids Seed, (and 'is to be understood of all the Seed of Christ, whom David typed, P(al. 89.) If his children for fake my Lam. (v.30, 31.) Then (verf. 32.) will I vifit their transgressions with the Rad, &c. How true this charge of Elibu was, as to Fols omillion of dury, I shall not stay to enquire; only this we know, Feb had professed trust in God, yet because it was mingled with so much complaint, with so many unbelieving expostulations, Eliha might fay the Lord missed the patience, trust and confidence, which he expected from 7.5. Doubtlesse, more of all these should have appeared in him, and they should have appeared more in that time of affliction. There are two things which God looketh for, and aims at in the time of our affliction; first, the mortifying of corruptions, that they work no more, at least no more so strongly as they have done; secondly, The stirring up, and acting of our Graces, that they may be more working, and work more strongly than ever they have done. Where the Lord sees not these effects of affliction, that our sins grow lesse, and our graces more, that we complain lefte, and trust or believe more, we are like to be afflicted more, and he will discover his anger more. Because it is not so, he hath visited in his anger. And thence

Note, Thirdly;
Distrust or impatience under the afflicting hand of God, or our not trusting God in our worst condition patiently, is a very provoking sin.

We provoke the Lord to visit us in his anger, when we do not

stuff in his mercy. Our not truffing God must needs provoke him to anger; for when we do not trust him, we question him; diffrust or unbelief questions all that God is, and all that God hath promifed, it questions his Truth, and his Faithfulnesse, his Power, his Mercy, and his Goodnesse; all these, which are the glory of God, and in all which the fons of men ought to glorifie him, these are all questioned and darkned, when we put not form acts of trust and reliance upon God, in times of greatest affliction and extremity. Is it not then a provoking fin, I say not to with-draw trust from God, and give it to an arm of flesh, but not to put out fresh and full acts of trust upon God, let our affliction or extremity be what it will! The Children of Ifrael were in great extremity at the Red Sea, a mighty Army pursuing them at the heels to deltroy them, and mighty waters being before them, ready to swallow them up; in these Braits (whilest they should have done their utmost to get, and assure God to be their Friend) the Pfalmilt tells us, They provoked him, (Pfal. 106, 7.) But wherein lay their provocation? that Scripture faith, They remembred not the multitude of his mercies : The former mercies of the Lord did not strengthen their trust in present troubles; that was one provocation. And as former mercies did not Arengthen their truft, so the present trouble drew out their di-Hrutt, as another Scripture assures, reporting their behaviour in. it (Exod. 14.11.) And they faid to Moses, Because there were no Graves in Egypt, hast thou taken as away to dye in the Wildernesse ? Wherefore half thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? What were these fearful fore-casts, the eamazing bodements of an unavoidable (as they apprehended) ruine, but the everflowings of unbelief, or distruct in God; and this was another provocation. Former mercies are forgotten, yea eaten up by unbelief, as the seaven lean Kine in Pharaohs dream, eat up the far ones, and present difficulties are aggravated by unbelief, as if all the power of God could not remove and overcome them. And will not the Lord (think you) visit in anger for such a sin as this?

Again, As Eliha doth not say barely, he hath visited, but he hath visited in his anger, or his anger hath visited, so consider, who was it that was thus visited in anger? It was Job, a Godly

man, a man perfect and upright.

Hence

Hence note, Fourthly; God visits or afflicts, even his own people, his elect, and choicest servants, with fatherly anger, when they distlease and provoke him.

Chap. 35.

We find the Scripture speaking expressy of the anger of God towards the best of his servants, even towards a Moses, (as himself made consession, Deuter. 1. 37.) when they displease him; Alfo the Lord was angry with me for your sakes, saying, thou also shalt not go in thither. Moses was a most meek war, the meekest man upon the face of the earth, nor was he an inferior in any other grace, yet the Lord was angry with him, and angry with him upon that special occasion, his unbeliefe, (Numb. 20. 12.) And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, because ye believe me not, to sanctifie me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore &c. We read of the Lords anger breaking out against Aaron for another fin, (Numb. 12.9.) The anger of the Lord was kindled against them, that is, against Aaron and Miriam, because they had spoken against Moses, (vers. 1.8.) Aaron was the High Priest, and as he was high in office, so eminent in grace; and doubtless Miriam was a very gracious woman, yet the Lord was not only angry with them, but exceeding angry; his anger waxed hot against them and kindled, when they forgot their duty to Moses, and remembred not their distance with reverence. Solomon in his prayer at the Dedication of the Temple, speaks of the people of God collectively; If they fin against thee, and thou be angry with them. The Lord is not only angry with the world, but angry with his Church, not only angry with Babylon, but with Ferusalem. And as Solomon spake that of the whole Nation of the Tewes, supposing they might fall under the Lords anger all together as a body; so he did experience it sadly in his own person, (I Kings 9.11.) And the Lord was angry with Schonson, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Ifrael, which had appeared unto him twice. Wife Solomon departed from God through an evil heart of unbelief and vanity, after the Lord had come and appeared to him more than once in grace and favour; and the bitter effects or fruits of that departure, appeared to him thortly after, the Lord (faith that Scripture) was angry with Solomon; and the sequel of his History tells us, there went out very hot dis-R 2

pleasure against him. As these Scriptures are a proof of the Lords anger kindling against his people when they sin; so we find the Church repretented praising the Lord for quenching the fire of his ange; (Is 12.1.) And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. When we turn to God, his anger is turned away from us. When the Lord is angry, what can comsoit us, but the turning away of his anger? And by the very act of tu ning away his arger, he comforts us, though all the world be angry with us.

But some may say, How doth the Lord, who is said to love his people with an everlasting love, visit them in anger? To clear

that, we may diffinguish of anger.

First, There is correcting anger: Secondly, there is consuming or destroying anger. Destroying anger is inconsistent with everlasting love, but not correcting anger: correcting anger may be very grievous, therefore the Prophet deprecates it, (fer. 10. 24.) Correct me, O Lord, in Judgement, not in thy anger. The Lord doth often exercise (that is as often as there is cause, and we give him cause too often to exercise) a smart and severe anger towards his own people; but his consuming and destroying anger is the lot and portion of the wicked; If his anger be kindled but a little (namely against his enemies) blessed are they that trust in him; blessed are they that believe, when that anger of the Lord breaks sorth against unbelievers. Or we may state it thus;

First, God is angry with finful persons; thus he is angry with

the world, or with wicked men.

Secondly, God is angry with persons for sinning, (there is a great difference between these two; anger with sinful persons, and anger with persons for their sin, or for sinning) and thus he is angry with his own people, even with the godly when they sin,

though not for every fin.

Further, We may distinguish of anger thus; There is anger mixed with a desire of taking revenge upon those that we are angry with, a revengeful anger: thus the Lord is angry only with the wicked. Of this anger Moses speaks, having described a presumptuous sinner, who believes not only without a word, but against the word, who when he heareth the word of the curse, biesseth

himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness unto thirst; then the anger of the Lord and his jealouse shall smook against that man, &c. (Deut. 29. 19,20.) Read more of this revengesulanger of the Lord, (Dent. 32. 22, 41, 42.) Secondly, there is anger with a defire to reforme, and reclaime those that we are angry with: Thus a loving and indulgent father is angry with his child, when he hath committed a fault; he is angry, not with an anger of desire to revenge, but with an anger of desire to reforme. And thus the Lord is angry with his own people, with his choicest servants, and dearest children, when they forget their duty and play the wantons.

Lastly, We may distinguish of anger thus; There is First, a temporary anger: As there is a temporary faith in hypocrites, so (we may fay) there is a temporary anger in God against the faithful when offending; that is, he is angry with them for a while, for a season: Sing unto the Lord, O ye Saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his Heliness, (faith David, Pial. 30. 4.) Buc why doth he call them to finging? we have the reason of it given at the 5th verse, For his anger enduresh but a moment; he speaks there of the Lords anger against his Saints and peculiar people : while they indeed have cause to mourn for provoking the Lord to anger, they may also sing, both because his anger endureth but for a moment, that is, because (if that be all) it endureth not at all, (a moment is of no endurance) as also because in his favour is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Once more, hear the Prophets report of the Lords anger, (Micab 7.18.) Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage; he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. God do h not retain his anger for ever; that is, not long; yea, that not for ever, is but a little while, a moment, and that but a small moment, as the Prophet Isaiah spake, (Chap. 54. 7.) As if he had said, The Lords anger is not retained follong, as if it should be alwayes retained; his anger towards you is foon blown over, and gone, upon the matter (like a moment) as foon as come. Such is the anger which God discovers towards his own people.

Secondly, There is an anger for ever, an abiding wrath, a fire of anger which never goeth out, nor can be put out, which is kind-

led in the breast of God against ungodly men, and against them only as living and dying without repentance, in their ungodlinels. Fob a godly man, was visited in the former, not in this lat-

ter anger.

Yet for the fuller answer to this query, as it concerns Jobs case, I conceive Elihu speaks with the highest and hardest towards him. For though it be a truth, that the Lord discovers, as was shewed before, a fatherly anger towards his children when he chafteneth them for their fin, yet he chasteneth them more, or rather, in love than in anger; As whom he loves, he rebukes and chaftens, (Rev. 3. 19.) so he chastens and rebukes them in love. And as for Fob, whom God dearly loved, it is cleare from the first and second Chapters of this Book, that God afflicted him not for any special sip, or way of sinning, but for his tryal, and to set him up as a great pattern of patience to all succeeding generations. Or we may say that God afflicted fob, not because of any provocation which he had given him, but at Satans instance and provocation, (Chap. 2.3.) All that can be said for Elihu's help in saying that God vifited him in anger, is only this, That though Job had not provoked the Lord to visit him in anger when he began to visit him, yet some impatient and over-bold speeches of his, or that liberty of speech which he took in expostulating and almost contesting with God about his afflictions, might cause him to visit him in such anger as hath been set forth in answer to the query. And now because it is not to, because the Lord misseth those acts of grace, trust and patience, which thy case calleth thee to the exercise of, He hath visited in his anger; and what followeth?

Yet be knoweth it not in great extremity.

Elihu feems to have spoken this turning himself to the comtit ad auctim pany, and complaining to them of Tobs insensibleness, Tet he know-Et nonadvervalde i.e, Ni- eth not, &c.

bil discrevit

Some refer this clause of the verse to God also, He hath visited (sc: dem) qued in his anger, and taketh no notice of the great increase, or of that non vistares, e- which is greatly increased; that is, God hath spared nothing from tiams eare vie his visitation, although the party visited were never so much griedslerer. Nam ved or damnified in the loss and spoyle of his all. There was a nenecesse eratvi- ceffity (faith this Author) that he who was visited should be so Juatum itstan- coucht as to be sensible of the Aroake; which could not be, unless the greatest of his encrease, and those things which were most giut sentiret: dear to him were taken away from him, or he were stript naked quod fier i non poterat, si non control them.

Our translation refers these words to the person visited, as if he, chariffing qudq; though reduced to the greatest extremities, yet was not sensible bona adimerential, or took no notice of what he suffered, or was done to him; two. Coci.

Tet he knoweth it not in great extremity. Who knoweth not? the Antecedent to he is fob, according to this translation; because he knoweth not. But what did not fob know? First, He knew not the dealings of God with him, to submit to them as he should. Secondly, He knew not that there was such a miss or desiciency in the acting of his graces, he perceived not how weak a soul he had in that weak body; his trust, his faith, did not act, and yet he knew it not, or took no notice of his fayling in those duties. Thirdly, He hath visited in his anger, yet he knoweth it not, that is, he knoweth not the anger of God, who visiteth him. To know may be taken three wayes.

First, For the bare notion or apprehension of a thing; thus certainly Job did know that he was visited, for he spake often and

enough of ir.

Secondly, To know, is to consider, to lay a thing to heart, (Isa. 1.3.) My people doth not know, Israel doth not consider, the latter part is exegetical, and expounds the former, My people doth not know, that is, doth not consider. So (Hos. 2.8.) She did not know that I gave her corn, &c. (Pfal. 90. 11.) Who knoweth the power of thy anger? that is, who considers it? Who weighes what the anger of the Lord is? we have sweet thoughts, about the mercy, and love, and goodness of God, yet 'ris little, very little of any of these that we know. The love of God, which we delight to know, passeth knowledge, (Eph. 3. 19.) But for the anger of God, which is so dreadful, we seldome set our selves to the study of it; none can know it comprehensively, and sew seek or labour to know it industriously, considerately.

Thirdly, To know, is to be under a due sense of what we know: We may know a thing, and consider it, yet not have a feeting of it. I conceive we are to understand the word know here, in these two latter senses; He knoweth it not; that is, he doth not consider, nor hath he a due sense, either of the desect of his owngraces, that his faith acts not as it ought, that his trust performes

gi ut sentiret: quod fieri non poterat, si non O pleraq; D charissima quéq; bona adimerentur. Coci not its part as it should; not doth he know the anger of God in this visitation; that is, he knoweth not, nor considereth, the scope and meaning of God in this angry dispensation. Yet he knoweth it

In great extremity.

wo eft in Multitudo, multum paffim occurrit in Targ:Interdum Mierc.

The word fignifieth any kind of encrease (Mal. 4. 2.) They shall go forth, and grow up as the Calves of the Stall. So 'tis used (Jer. 50. 11.) Because ye are grown fat, we put in the Margin, big or corpulent. (Lev. 13. 5.) If the Plague (of Leprosie he in Hebraismo. means) encrease, grow great, and spread it lels, then &c. Jobs affliction was a great one at first, and it grew greater afterwards: He was in great extremity, or in extremities; of what? in great extremity, First, of loss and poverty in his Estate; Secondly, of pain and torment in his Body; Thirdly, of grief and anguish in his Soul: In all these he suffered, and suffered extreamly, or in great extremity. Mr. Broughton renders, Because Job knoweth nos this great plenty, namely, of forrows, which compass him about.

This was the censure of Elihu upon Job, and Job had given Elihu too much ground for this censure. Though Jobs Faith and trust were strongly at work somtimes, yet they did not alwayes continue their work in the same degree or strength: and while he often complained in his extremity, that God dealt with him as with an enemy, he did not well confider what that anger of God was, in which he visited him, during the time of that great excremity: Yet be knoweth it not in great extremity.

As this not knowing is referred to his weakness in acting his

Graces; now, it is not fo, yet he knoweth it not;

Note ; A godly man is not alwayes sensible of his defects and failings in grace.

As some have lit le or no Grace, who yet conceit they have much (Rev. 3. 17.) Thou sayest, I amrich, and encreased in goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou artwretched and miserable, and poor, and naked. So others who have grace, yea, much grace in the habit (as fob had) may be very insensible how little it acts, yea they may suppose it acts much, when the actings of it are intermitted or extreamly suppressed by passion

and corruption: They may think their Faith strong, or that they trust fully in God, they may think themselves patient and humble under the hand of Gcd, and yet be greatly defective in the working of all these Graces; I mean not such a desiciency only, as is common to all believers (the best come short in the exercise of grace) but some great deficiency may be, and yet the soul not fensible of it. As some are over-sensible of their failings, complaining that they have no Faith, no Patience, when they not only have Faith and Patience, as to their Being, but as to their working also, and possibly, working well. (It is a different work of the Spirit, to act and stirup Grace in us, and to discover to us the actings and stirrings of Grace) Now as some godly men act Grace, and know it not, so in others that are godly Grace acts not, and they know it not; Faith is down, and they know it not; they can bear little or nothing patiently, yet they take no notice of it. Thus the words of Elihu concerning Job, he knoweth it not, refere to the former part of the verse, It is not so; that is, his Graces act nor, yet he takes no notice of it, but thinks Faith and Patience, with other Graces, work well enough.

Secondly, As not knowing refers to the visitation of God, He hath visited him in his anger, and he knoweth it not (yea, though) in great extremity, though he have a very hard time of it.

Hence Note, First,
A good man may not only be visited, but extreamly visited by
the hand of God;

He may be under many extremities at once; extreamly visited in Body, extreamly in Mind, extreamly in his Relations, extreamly in his Name, extreamly in all his work by concernments. As there is no outward evil, for the matter, so none for the degree, but a good man may be in it. Let us be moderate in judging those, who are in the extreamest extreamities of suffering.

Secondly, Note;
Some good men, or good men somtimes under very great affilitions, are not sensible of the hand of the Lord upon them.

As a good man may receive many mercies, and yet not observe (at present) how, or from whom he receives them, so he may be under angry visitations or dispensations in great excremity, and

not mind the dealing of God with him in it, nor what he intendeth by it; yea, he may complain of the burthen, and cry out under the pressure, yet not know it at that time for his own good, for his humbling or purging. The Prophet faith concerning Ephraim, (Hof. 7.9.) Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knowethie not : That is, Enemies have swallowed up, or taken away that wealth, those riches, they have subdued those Armies, those Forces, which he looked upon, and boasted of, as his strength; they have broken him quite with Warrs & Invalions, yet Ephraim knew it not: and not only fo, but as it followeth, Yea, Gray bairs are here and there upon him; that is, he hath many Symptomes or Signs of ruine and destruction, yet be knoweth it not. Grief of heart for great changes in our Estate, change the hair; many grow gray with forrow. So that, when 'tis faid gray hairs are upon him, 'tis an allusion taken from the Body Natural to the Body Politick; for as when the natural Body of a man hath gray hairs appearing, or (as Solomon allegorizeth, Eccl. 12.5.) when the Almond Tree flourisheth, it is an argument that old Age and infirmities are coming upon him (Gray hairs tell us that Death and the Grave are not farr off, they fignifie some decay of nature.) Now as the natural Body hath its gray hairs, so a Politick Body, the body of a State hath its gray hairs too; that is, fomthing may come upon a State, which sheweth that it is declining and waxing old, that it is ready to break, and go to the Grave. I thall not stay to enquire what are the gray hairs of a Nation; I only bring that Scripture, to prove that many are insensible of the hand of God; he visiteth in bis anger, yet man, possibly a good man, knoweth it not, as Ephraim knew not of his gray hairs.

But did not Ephraim know his affliction? or did not Job know his? what is it to know, or who may be faid to know an affli-

Stion ? I answer, they only know their afflictions, or that God is visit-

ing in his anger,

First, who labour to find out the cause of Gods visitation. If we feel the afflicting hand of God upon us, and enquire not, whence is this? why is it so? what hath moved or provoked the Lord to this manner of proceeding with us ? If, I fay, we make not fuch enquiries, we are visited in anger, and know it not. And therefore in that case, the Prophet Jeremy exhorts the afflicted, captivated Church

Church of the Tewes in Babylon, to fearch and try their wayes, (Lam. 3.41.) that is, to confider why it was so with them, what was the cause of their captivity. Till we fit down and make diligent search, why we are visited, why any affliction or calamity is upon our Persons and Families, or upon the Kingdomes and Nations respectively where we live, we know neither the day of our visitation, nor what our visitation is. Then only we know Gods visitation, when we are studying the causes of it; To know a thing Scire of per causes foire. is to know it in the causes of it.

Secondly, They may be faid to know the visitation of the Lord, that are studying, as the cause which they have given, so the ends and purposes which God hath in visiting them; for how much soever we find and see the causes of an affiction, yet till our hearts are drawn out to answer the ends of it, we do not truly know it.

But you will say, what are the usual ends which the Lord hath.

in afflicting his people?

I answer, First, to turn them from fin; Secondly, to unglew and weanthem from the world; Thirdly, that they may live nearer to, or more with him; Fourthly, that they may live more unso him, or (web takes in both the latter ends) that they may enjoy him more while they live, & honour him more with their lives. Now (I fay) ill we are upon this kind of study, both of the causes of our visitation, and the ends of it, & beg that we may both remove those causes, & comply with or answer those ends, we may be said not to know the visitation of the Lord, though it be, and we are, in great extremity. And if this be to know the visitation of God, surely many are periffing and finking under the hand of his vifitation, who yet know it not. How many are there, who her her endeavour to fearch out the causes, nor to fulfil the ends for which the Lord vifiteth them in his anger! I conceive this affertion, or supposition at least of Elihu's concerning Job, both as to his not trusting God in his affliction, and not knowing his vification, was, though in part true, and occasion'd on Jobs part, yet over-harsh and severe: nor was the inference which he made from it in the next verse, less severe and harsh.

Verl. 16. Therefore doth Tob open his mouth in vain, he multiplyeth words without knowledge.

Here's

Here's the conclusion of Elibu's third Discourse with 70b:

Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain.

Some connect this verse with the sormer, according to the first reading of it, before mentioned, that giving a reason of this; But now his anger (or he in anger) hath visited thee but a little, or nothing, &c. Therefore thou, O Job, openest thy mouth in vain. As it he had said, Because the anger of God hath not punished Job sharply enough, nor in proportion to the multitude and greatness of his sins, therefore he speaks thus boldly and rashly.

Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain.

To open the mouth is a Pariphrasis of speaking; As is he had said, therefore Job speaks in vain. To speak in vain, or to use vain words, is to speak to little or no purpose, as I have had occasion to shew upon other places of this Book (Chap. 15. 2. Chap. 16.3.) and therefore shall not stay upon it here. Job was no vain speaker, he used to speak words of weight, words of soberness and truth, yet was overborn by passion, though not to speak vain words in the

matter, yet to speak or open his mouth in vain.

Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain. Consider the Inserence, therefore, that is, First, Because he doth not humble himself in a patient dependance upon God; Secondly, because he doth not, as he ought, duly take notice of the purpose of God in visiting him; Thirdly, because he seems more solicitous and zeasous in defending his own right and credit, than the honour and righteousness of God: for all these Reasons he openeth his mouth in vain, that is, he loseth his sabour, in all this di course, and might (as we speak proverbially) have saved his breath to cool his broth: Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain. Taking the Charge which Elihu brought against Job in the sormer verse, to be well grounded and true, we may Note,

All our complaints to, and debates with God, as also all our Apologies for our felves in affliction, are fruitless and successes,
till we give Glory to God, and answer his purposes, in laying
his hand upon us.

fensive wand Unless our hearts bow to God, he will not bow his ear to us. fensive inops, We only fill the air with words, we are but sounding brass and tinkling.

tinkling Cimbals in all we say to God, unless we do what God tantum sonnu saith. Elihu supposing J bs spirit yet unsubdued or not wrought verborum of and brought into a right frame under his affliction, might well say, clumosa. be openeth his mouth in vaine; and as it followeth to the same effect in the close of this verse and Chapter,

He multiplieth words without knowledge.

Here is another hard censure, upon this good, this holy, and wise man Job. Some Expositers fall heavy upon Elihu, as charging Job too far; he spake (say they) many things that were right, but not rightly; he spake many things that were true, but he did not speak truly in fixing them upon Job; he spake all uprightly, but somewhat too rigorously: And indeed, if he had charged him so far, as to say, he had no knowledge at all, and had not opened his mouth at all to purpose, he had charged him beyond both truth and modesty. But Elihu, who was set up by God for this very end to humble Job, had ground to tell him, that as to some things, he had both opened his mouth in vaine, and multiplied words without knowledge; that is, he had spoken many words which seemed not to proceed from any sound or well-grounded knowledge; and I may give a four-fold ground of it.

First, Because he had not sufficiently attended and magnified the Soveraignty of God, in laying those afflictions upon him.

Secondly, Because he had not, as he ought, sate down quietly under the hand of God; but often called to know the cause, and that God would plainly tell him the reason, or give him an account why he suffered: Whereas he should have remembred, hat as many of the judgements of God are unsearchable, and his wayes past finding out by man, so he hath reserved some of them as secrets in his own breast, and will no more give any man an account of them, than any man ought to desire an account of them.

Thirdly, Because he had not more considered his sin, or had not been so much in considering the greatness of his sin, as he had been in setting forth the greatness of his integrity. For though it were true which Job spake, that his way was upright, and though God had given testimony to his uprightness and integrity in all his wayes, yet he should not have insisted so much upon that poyne, which had so much affinity with self-boasting, though he intended it only for self clearing, or for the righting of himself. It had been

more becoming him to have been aggravating his sin, than setting forth his righteousness; this was the poynt that Elihu struck at, that he had justified himself too much, and judged himself too little. Yea Job was convinced of this at last, Once have I spoken, but I will speak no more, that is, of my own integrity, or righteousness.

Fourthly, He may be said to have multiplied words without knowledge, because he had spoken so much in the aggravation of his afflictions: 'Tis true, his afflictions were very great; yet Elihu censures him deservedly, because he took too much notice of them, complaining often and often, how heavy the hand of God was upon him, yea that God was an enemy to him; whereas he should rather have looks upon the visitation of God, as light and easie, or (at least) as but little comparatively, to what the Lord was able to lay upon him, or what his fin might justifie God in laying upon him. Eliku having observed Job often and long striking upon that string, hightning his sufferings and troubles, had reason enough not only to call him off from it, but to check him for ir. And therefore let us remember and be admonished, that in all our afflictions we should not so much set forth the greatness of our suffering, as the greatness of the mercy of God; we should look upon little mercies as great, (it shews an excellent spirit, when we heighten and greaten the mercy and goodness of God, even in little things) but we should speak of, and look upon our greatest chastenings and afflictions as light, and little. Fob fayled somewhat in all these things, and in some of them his faylings were great; and upon some of, if not upon all these grounds, I judge Elihu gave this judgement upon Tob ; He openeth his mouth in vaine, and multiplieth words without know-

ledge.

Job also yeilded himself thus faulty at last (Chap. 42. 3.)

Who is he (there he speaks of himself in a third person, Who is
he) that hideth counsel without knowledge; therefore have I attered
that I understood not, things too wonderfull for me, which I knew

I shall close my thoughts upon this Chapter, with minding the Reader: First, of Elibu his candedness towards Job, beyond what he found from his other friends; for Elibu chargeth Job here, only with vanity and inadvertency, not with any premeditated wicked-

Inscitiam objicit quod pugnantia, saltem
non satu inter
se cohærentia
conjunzit.
Merl:

wickedness or blasphemy, as Eliphaze had done, (Chap. 22. 13, 14.) Secondly, let me mind the Reader, of that liberty and plainness of speech which Eliha used towards Job, in telling him of, and censuring him for his saylings; as also of that patience, meekness, and equanimity, with which Job heard, received, and bare his sharpest censures, not replying one word in passion, nor so much as pleading the least excuse for his former passionateness, but taking all in good part, and, doubtless, improving all for his spirituall profit.

TOB.

JOB, Chap. 36. Vers. 1, 2, 3, 4.

I. Elihu also proceeded, and said,

2. Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee, that I have yet to speak on Gods behalf.

3. I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will

ascribe righteousness to my Maker.

4. For truly my words shall not be false: he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.



Libu hath already made three addresses or speeches to Job, and here he begins a sourth; this and the next Chapter are wholly spent in it, and are the issue of his whole discourse with this sorrowful man. In which

we may consider three parts.

First, The Preface, or rather the Prefaces of his speech.

Secondly, The Body or Substance of his Speech.

Thirdly, The Conclusion of it.

The Preface or Prefaces, the Introductions of this Discourse of Elihu with Job, are contained in the source verses of this Text under hand.

The Body of his Discourse, is begun at the fifth verse inclufively, and continued to the 23d verse of the next Chapter exclufively.

The Conclusion of all, is laid down in the two last verses of

the 37 Chapter.

In this copious Discourse or long Oration, Elibu brings not any new affertion, or saying of Job, to be proved against him, nor doth he reprove Job for any new fault, but insists upon the proof of what himself had afferted before, to shew that God is righteous, or to maintain the righteousness of God; which he doth variously by looking through the various works of God, those especially which are wrought on high, the Meteors of the aiery region, the raine,

raine, the snow, the lightening, and the thunder, in and by all which, report is made, as of the Wildome and Power, so of the Justice and Righteousnesse of God, who often declareth his mind to Mankind by those Teachers, and proclaims by their mouths (as it were by found of Trumpet) how terrible he is, and will be to wilful and impenitent finners. That's the fumme of his A:gumentation, or the Scope of this his last undertaking with Job.

Vers. 1. Elihu also proceeded, and said.

This is the Pen-mans Pieface, he makes the Connexion thus between the former and this discourse; Elihu also proceeded, and faid: The Hebrew is, Elihu added, that is, to his former speeches he added this. We render the word he continued, (Chap. 23. 1.) Elibualfo proceeded, o: continued his speech, and faid; and what said he? that begins at the next verse.

Verl. 2. Suffer me a little, and I will show thee, that I have yet to speak on Gods behalf.

Here begins Elihu's own Preface, the aim or tendency of which nificatu chalis to gain Jobs attention and subscription to what he had to say, daicum oft, and he fuggesteth four Arguments or Morives in these three Ver- Druf. fes, to draw out the attention of Job, and likewise to gain his submission to what he should lay before him.

First, He gives him an Argument from his intended brevity, I'le be thort, I mean not to be redious, I will not tire thee, nor wear out thy patience with a long Discourse: Suffer me a little.

His fecond Argument is taken from the greatness of the Person, in whose name and behalf he was about to speak: As if he had faid, Hear me, for it is not my own Cause, nor the Cause of any man that I have in hand, I speak for God, Suffer me a little, and I will her thee, what I have yet to fay for God.

His third Argument is taken from the Authority in which he would speak. Hear me diligently, for what I have to say, is not only for God, but from God; I will fetch my knowledge from num dicam. afar, and ascriberighteonsnesse to my Maker, vers. 3.

Fourthly, Which is a necessary Consequent of the former two, he would be heard, because he resolved (and hoped he should make good that resolution) to speak the truth, and nothing but the truth; he offers this at the 4th Verse, For truly my words

shall not be false, be that is perfect in knowledge is with thee. These are the four Asguments contained in this Presace, by which Elbasike a wife perswasive Ocator, would draw on the attention of Job in hearing, and gain his approbation in receiving what he had to say. We may gather up the spirit and substance of all his Arguments into this one.

He is to be patiently heard, and readily affented to, who intends to speak but a little, and that little for God, and that little from God, and that in truth, and nothing but the truth.

But what I am now about to speak shall be but little, and that for God, and from God, and that in truth and nothing but the truth;

Therefore I am to be heard patiently, &c.

Suffer me a little.

Stacirca me paululum. Mont.

nodicum est temport et quantitatu diseretæ.

Some render, fand, or flay about me; that is, have patience a while, be not hasty. Impatient persons will be gone, they will not abide by it, to hear another out. Our Translation reaches this sence fully (according to the Idiom of our Language) Suffer me a little. The word which we render little, may referre either to the littleness or brevity of his Speech, or to the littleness of the space or time which he would spend in speaking; we joyn both here; as if he had faid, I will not speak much, and therefore I shall not take up much of your time. The word is used by the Prophet with an addition, (Isa. 10. 25.) Yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction; that is, in the destruction of the enemies of my People. As if he had said, My wrath shall not abide, it shall not last long, nor continue upon my People; and when I have done with them, it shall be turned upon their enemies and oppressors, the Assyrians, and towards them it shall not cease, till they are utterly overturned. Take one instance more in the same Propher, nearer the businesse of the Text in Job. (Ifa. 28. 10, 11.) Line upon Line, Precept upon Precept, here a Little, and there a Little, or now a little, and then a little. They shall not be overburdened, they shall have it by drops, by inches, by little and little, as they are able to bear; just as children and young Novices are taught, who cannot receive much at once, but now a letter and then a letter, now a tule, and then a tule.

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Possibly Elihu perceived Job was not in a case to hear much, and therefore condescending to his weak condition by reason of his long sufferings, he saith to him, Suffer me a little.

Chap. 36.

Yet further, I conceive, when Elihu faith to Job, Suffer me a little, it may fignifie one of these two things, or both of them. First, That Job had given him some interruption as he was speaking before. It is usual with us, if when a man is speaking, any interpose, to say, Pray suffer me a while, you shall have your liberty to object or reply what you please when I have done. Secondly, That he had shewed some distaits action with what Elihu had speken sully out, or when he had done speaking, and therefore he desired that he might surther cleer the matter, and speak out his mind, yer, at least, a little more, if it might be to his sull satisfaction, and the removal of all his doubts. Suffer me a little.

Lay all these things together, and they will teach us a poynt of prudence, so to compose and compact what we have to say, that it may not be grievous or burthensome to those that hear us, especially not to those who (as Fob was) are already grieved in mind, or body, or both. As the Spirit of God, left the Faith and Patience of his People should fail in sufferings, telleth, year assureth them, it is but a little while that they shall suffer; relief, or deliverance, and which is more, the Reliever, the Deliverer, is making half towards them, (Heb. 10. 27.) Yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry; as the Spirit of God (I say) doth thus nurse up the Faith of his People in suffering times : so we had need to nurse up the attentions of our Hearers at all times, but then chiefly when they are under any kind of suffering, and say, yet a little, suffer us a little, we will not burthen you much. There are two things of admirable use in speaking. First, Brevity. Secondly, Perspicuity. 'Tis true, that they that strive to be short, prove very obscure; yet doubtless, 'tis no very hard thing, in most matters, to joyn perspicuity with brevity, and to give a clear fense in a few words. And though it be a truth, That when we have faid much of God, and of the things of God, we have faid but little, yea, that when we have spoken our all, there remains infinitely more to be spoken, yet we should as much as may be, aim at breviry, especially where the Person spoken to is weak, and unfitted by bodily indispositions to hear much. Suffer me a little,

And I will hew thee, &c.

TTT Amplam et sussorem rei elucidationem st declaratio-Bold.

That is, I will make all plain to thee, I will give thee a full declaration of my mind, and I hope of the truth, I will fet all before thee, that so upon a review thou mayest the easier apprehend non importat: my fense, and give thy sentence about it. Day unto day uttereth speech, (saith David, Piat. 19. 2.) and night unto night sheweth knowledge. 'Tis this word, and it notes a very plain and evident manifestation of that which is offered to be known; the very night carrieth a light in it concerning the glory of God; I will (hew thee

That I have yet to speak on Gods behalf.

Dativus verqui Deo, est non folum pro Deo desendendo, sed etiam honorificando sermonem affumere. Bold.

reverentiam non deberi, Domini non nunquam potentiam, de qua insimuant, &c. Greg. in Loc.

Some read for God, or to God; that is for the glory of God, bis addition in- or to the honour of God, in the clearing up of his righteousness, dicat honorem against those blemithes which thy speech, if not intentionally, yet er cultum, lo- consequentially, hath cast upon it; I will speak that which may both convince thee, and justifie God. The Original Text strictly is thue, I will show thee that there are yet words for God; that is, I will make it appear that many things more may be faid and proved in pursuance of this Poynt, for thy further humiliation under the mighty hand of God, and for the Lords vindication in all his dealings with thee, I speak for God: Nor was this a meer pre-Quia sape ar- tence, or a vain boast, as I find some Expositers (I conceive very rogantes sibi causelessy) charging Elihu, as if here he published a zeal to speak sentiumssilemii for God, that he might gain applause, or draw a reverence upon himself, in what he had to speak. Some ('tis granted) have cryed up the Name of God, when they closely aimed at their own: But doubtless, Elibu was honest and plain hearted, when he said, that what he had to say was for God; as he pretended, so he was quafiloquuntur really for God; I have yet to speak on Gods behalf.

Hence Observe, First; It is a mans honour, as well as his waty, to be an Advocate for

As it is mans comfort, his choicest comfort, that God hath provided an Advocate for him, that he bath found out one to speak to himself in our behalf, namely, Jesus Christ; so it is both the duty and honour of man, to be an Advocate for God.

For

For if, Fi.ft, it be a great honour to know God, and to have God made known to us; He hath not dealt for with any Nation (as be dealt with the Jews, in giving them the knowledge of his mind) and as for his Judgements they have not known them, (Pfal. 147. 20.)

Secondly, It it be a greater honour to believe, and obey ac-

cording to what we know, then

Thirdly, When we know, when we believe and obey, our greatest honour of all is to plead for, and stand up in Gods beh.If, to undertake (being called) the defence of his truth and of his wayes, to contend earnestly for the Faith, once (by God) delivered to the Saints, which is indeed the only good contention. Paul saith (Phil. 1. 17.) I am set for the defence of the Gaspel. Paul was a Champion ready to cope and buckle with all comers for Christ or the Gospel; and therefore at the 20th verse of the same Chapter, he saith, the great thing he lookt after was, That Jesus Christ might be magnified in his body, whether by life, or by death. There are three wayes whereby we appear as Advocates on Gods behalf; First, By saying, or arguing; Secondly, By doing or practifing; Thirdly, By enduring and suffering; and by all Christ is magnified in our body; the two former wayes, by life, the latter by death, or by that which bears the Image of it. There's no hing needs a fuller measure of desence for God, than the Truth of God; and we never stand up so fully on Gods behalf, as when we stand for his Truth, though our selves fall. To speak and do on Gods behalf, is most for our own behoof, though we get but small fees or wages, yea though we lose our all in this world for such speaking and doing. I could wish there were not too much cause of complaint, that God hath not many to speak on his behalf, and that Christ Jesus, our great, our only Advocate with God, hath few Advocates among men. When God as it were calls to us, Who is on mey fide? who? Truly there are but few that will appear for him, that is, for Truth, for Holiness, for holy Worthip; few appear for these things when differences arise about them. The corrupt part of the world in any Age will not, and the better part are not so free as they ought, to speak and appear (in fuch Cases) on Gods behalf. The world (faith St. John in the Revelation) mondred after the Beast; & he cannot want Advocates, who hath so many Admirers. But as the Admirers, so the Advocates

of the Lamb are not many, they are only a fealed, a felected Company. We can be very warm in speaking in our own Caute, and on our own behalf; but how cold and dead-hearted are we when we come to speak in the behalf of God! what a sad withdrawing is there from that duty! God stands up often on the behalf of his People, and owns them in their need, yet few own God, or the Truth of God, when there is most need. Remember, as it is our honour, so our duty to speak on Gods behalf; and they will come to a bad reckoning at last both for their doings and speakings, for the work both of hand and tongue, who have done and spoken much in their own behalf, and little or nothing on

Again, As Elihu makes this an Argument to provoke fob to hear him patiently,

Note, They that speak for God, ought to have audience.

It is an Argument commanding attention, to fay, I speak from God, or for God. As when the Lord himself speaks, all ought to hear; even those things that have no ears, are call'd upon to hear him speaking, or what is spoken from him, Hear O Heavens, and hearken O Earth, saith the Lord (Isa. 1.2.) Now, as when the Lord speaks all should hear, so all should hear when any thing is spoken on the Lords behalf; they that speak for the Lord in truth, speak also from the Lord. As truth bears the stamp and Image of God, so it tends to the glory of God. To resist the truth of God, spoken by a true Messenger, is to resuse the God of truth, (Luke 10. 16.) He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me. Not to hear those that speak for the Lord, and from the Lord, is indeed not to hear the Lord, and so they will be judged in the great day.

Thirdly, In that Elihu gathers up his Spirits, girds up the Loins of his mind upon this confideration, that he was to speak on.

Gods behalf,

Note, They who speak for God, may speak with courage, and be bold.

If any thing can encourage us to, and in a work, 'tis this, that we engage for God. That which puts spirit and life into us, is our

end and design in doing or speaking; now this is the highest end or defign, to argue for God; and therefore it may put the highest life, and liveliest spirits into man, it may make him that is weak, strong as a Gyant, and him that is fearful, bold as a Lyon, when he can speak in truth, that he is speaking truth on Gods behalf.

I will show thee that I have yet to speak.

That word (yet) hath a great Emphasis in it; he had been speaking in Gods behalf before, and sayes he, I have yet to speak.

Observe, They that truly begin to speak for God, will persevere in speaking

As when we have spoken our all of God, and for God, there is yet more to be spoken of him, and for him (God is an everlast-Argument, a Subject that can never be finished) so they who have begun (with an honest heart and right aims) to speak for God, will hold on and never give over to speak for him, while they have a call to it. A foul toucht with true zeal, finds it hard to make an end, when once he hath begun so good, and so honourable a service, as to speak for God. So much of the second Argument used by Elihu to gain attention : Suffer me a little, and I will show thee what I have yet to speak on Gods behalf. He spake for God. The third followeth.

Vers. 3. I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe Righteousnesse to my Maker.

This (I say) is Elibu's third Argument brought to the same purpose as before.

I will fetch my knowledge from afar,

Oca great way off. From how far? There are four notions elonginguo under which knowledge may be faid to be fetcht from afar.

First, That's knowledge from afar, which is of things out of exlingue idifight, or invisible, of things which not only are not, but cannot omate adjicibe seen. As if Elihu had said, I will not discourse about such things tur. Merc. as fall under common sensitive observation, I will not speak of eye- quadam, longeobjects, but of that and such things, as no eye bath seen, nor can see, petita. Vatab.

of God, and of Divine things, the things of God.

Secondly, From afar, may imply this, I will not treat about matters of alite Date of Edition, but of things done long fince. Thus David prefac'd his Speech, (Pfal. 68. 2, 3.) I will open my mouth in a Parable, I will atter dark Jayings of old, which we have heard, and known, and our Fathers have told us. Such things are far off from us, which were transacted and done a great while ago, or informer Ages, or in the first Age. As if Elibu had faid, I le fetch my knowledge, not from yesterday, but from ancient times, from the very beginning of the Creation, or from the Foundation of the world; such things are truly afar off; or, I will fetch my knowledge from those things which were before the beginning; that's more truly afar off. Thus a Learned Translater glosseth upon the Text, I will speak even of those things which were before any thing visible was, even from Eternity. The things of Eternity are most proper to fet forth and illustrate the honour of God, and most

Prout res fuit non tantum in de a seculi, sed etiam ante omnia secula. * Jun.

Ex operibus bus. Merc.

lively expresse his Power and Divine Persections. Thirdly, When he faith, I will fetch my knowledge from afar; the meaning may be this, It shall be of admirable and sublime things, the reason of which could not easily be given, nor presentdis et sublimi- ly found out. Those things are far from us, which we cannot dive into, nor reach, nor fathome the bottome of, by the Line of our understanding : Such are the secret Counsels of God before the world was, and some wayes of his Providence in dealing with men ever since the world was, which are therefore said to be unsearchable, and past finding out; and of these Elihu speaks at

large in this Chapter, to the 26th verse.

Fourthly, I will fetch my knowledge from afar, may be thus understood, I will speak to thee of things which I have much studied for ; I will not speak what comes nexr, nor what lyes uppermost, but will beat my brains for what I say, in most serious meditation; I will not offer thee any raw or undigested sentiments, but shall well and maturely consider before I speak; nor will I speak what my weak reason only tells me is true, but what by light from above, and I hope by the special teachings of cipio cognita, et God, I know to be true : I will fetch my knowledge, or that accurate pra- which I make known, from the depths of my heart, not from sudden flathes and conceits of my head. In all these senses possibly Elibs was resolved to fetch his knowledge from afar, he would

Ex remotis sed neceffarin principin agam, non nowiter excogitara seda prinmeditata proteram. Scult.

not take up, nor trouble Job with things that were obvious, common, or easie to be had, but being what he had to my out of the closest Cabinets, and utter conceptions, which were most remote from the common road.

There is yet another apprehension concerning Elbu's purpole, when he faith, I will fetch my knowledge from afar, with which I rather close than any of the former; that his meaning was ro speak to Tob of those things, which as they are not easily comprehended, because the sublimest works of God in nature, so because they might feem far from the present matter; As it he had faid, We have been arguing all this while about Gods di pensarions here below, but now I'le speake of things that are wrought above, of those both useful and dreadful or terrible Me eo s, the snow and raine, the windes, the lightening and the thunder; these things may be thought very forreigne and hererogeneal, very far off from the business in hand, but I will speak to thee of the'e things, even of the works of God in the Heavens, in the Air, in the Chambers of the Clouds, and I will convince thee by what God doth there above, of his righteoutness, in what he doth here below. The wisdome and power of God, in ordering those natural works in the Clouds, and in the Air, prove that man hath no cause to complain about his providential works on earth: For as chose wonderful visible works of God are real demonstrations of those invisible things of God, his erernal power and God-head, so they declare both his righteoniness and goodness, his wrath and mercy rowards the children of men in the various dispensations of them. And so although those things might be thought far from the poynt which Eliba supposed Tob questioned, at least by confequences, the righteousness of God in his severe dealings with him, yet indeed they contained principles or general grounds, by which that which Elihu had engaged to maintain might be fully confirmed and unanswerably concluded. This, I conceive, is the special afar off, that Eliha intended to fetch his knowledge from. as may appear in the close of this Chapter, and in the next, quite thorow. I will fetch my knowledge from afar.

Hence note;

First, The natural works of God, or the works of God in nature, are to be findied and searched out.

As the works of grace are afar off from all men, in a state of nature; so the works of God in nature, are very far off from the most of men; they know little of Gods works in the Heavens, or in the Earth, in the Sea, or in the Aire, yet all these are to be searched out with diligence by the sons of men.

Secondly, Note; The works of Creation and Providence, shew that God is, and what he is.

We may see who God is, in what he hath done; we say things are in their working, as they are in their being. God hath done like himself in all that he hath done; his own works (as well as his own Word) speak him best, (Psal. 19. 1.) The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sirmament sheweth his handywork, &c. The raine and snow declare the power of God, Thunder and Lightening shew what he can do.

Thirdly, Note; Knowledge is morth our longest travel, it will quit cost to go far for it.

We say, Some things are far fetcht, and dear bought; true knowledge, especially the knowledge of Jesus Christ deserves to be far fercht, and it cannot be too dear bought; we must drive a strange kind of trade with the truths of God; we must be alwayes buying, and never felling, yet that's a commodity will never lye upon our hands, never brayde. If we were to fetch our knowledge from afar, as to the distance of place, we should not think much of it. The Queen of the South fercht her knowledge from afar, the came a very great way, undertook a long journey, to hear the wisdome of Solomon; in that sense we should be willing to setch our knowledge from afar; yet some will scarce step over the threshold to fetch in knowledge. It is prophesied (Dan. 12. 4.) Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. Knowledge ought to be travell'd for as much as any thing in the world. We fetch our gold and filver, and rich Commodities, afar off, we go to the ends of the Earth for them, through a thousand deaths and dangers; we sayle within three inches of death for many moneths together, to fetch worldly riches from afar off; and shall we not fetch knowledge afar off, how far seever it is from

from us in distance of place, and what labour or cost seever we bestow to fetch it in ? I will fetch my knowledge from afar,

I will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.

These words contain the ground, purpose, or designe of Elihu in this whole discourse, which was to maintain the righteousness of God; I (faith he) will ascribe (the Hebrew strictly is give) righteonsness to my Maker; here's a very great undertaking, to PTS INK give righteoulness to God; God gives and imputes righteoulness to us; Tis the summe of the Gospel, that God imputes or ascribes righteousness to sinners: Now as God in a Gospel sense, gives righteoulness to us, both the righteoulness of justification, which is lodged in the person of Christ, and the righteousness of fanctification, which is lodged in our own perfons, though the spring and principle of that also be in Christ still; so we must give righteousness to God; that is, both believe and declare or publish to all the world, that God is just, and give him the praise of his justice, which is the best and noblest work we can do on Gods behalf in this world. There are two most excellent works, which indeed contain all our work in this world.

First, To do righteously, or all righteousness our selves. Se-

condly, To ascribe righteousness unto God.

But you will say, what is it to give or ascribe righteousness to

God?

I answer, It is to acknowledge, that God is righteous in all his wayes, and holy in all his works. Tis mans duty to justifie God, to ascribe that righteousness to him, which is properly his own. 'Tis Gods grace, his free-grace to justifie man, to ascribe that righteousness to him which is properly anothers. David made profession of the former as his duty, (Pfal. 50. 3,4.) lacknowledge may transgressions, and may fin is ever before me; that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and clear when thou judgest: That is, I'le confess my sin, that all the world may see the righte- Is gui peccat es oulnels of thy dealings with me, though thou shouldest deale ne- confitetur deo ver so severely with me, though thou shouldest speak the bitterest peccatum juthings against me, & pronounce a sentence of heaviest judgement redens ei vinupon me. The Apoltle referring to this place in the Pfalmes, centi et ab eo quotes the words in a passive forme and sense, not of God judg- gratian speing man, but of God judged by man, (Rom. 3. 4.) Lee God be rans. Ambros: true, 1, 6, in Luc:

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Mud in To upividu os,

true, but every man alyar; as it is written, that thou might eft be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged. As if David had faid, according to the Apostles reading out of the Septuagint, (which yet as learned Beza in his Annotations affirmeth, ought to be expounded actively, as if, I fay, David had thus expressed himself) Lord, I know some men will take the addite meo qui- boldness to question thee, yea and to condemn thee of rigour, dem judicio ne- when they see thy afflicting hand heavy upon me; therefore, eicandum off, ut ther to prevent such rash judgements of man, or that thou mayest Graca Hobra- gaine the day, and have the better in the opinion of all good and respondeant. wise men, over thy Judges, Behold, I here freely confess my Bez: in Rom: great fin, with all the aggravating circumstances of it, and surely they who know, or shall hear, how greatly I have sinned against thee, cannot but justifie thee, how great soever my sufferings may be. To speak thus is to ascribe righteousness unto God, in all that he doth, whether with respect to his publique judgements upon Nations, or particular, upon persons, in any way of affliction he is

pleased, and seeth need, to exercise them with.

And the reason why Tob was here charged by Elihuas a person not giving righteousness to God, was, because he did not fit down quietly and patiently under his hand in sufferings, but muttered and complained as a man unfatisfied with, though he did not openly murmur against the dealings of God with him. To give righteousness to God, is not only, not to accuse him as unrighteous and unjust, but to thank him for, and honour him in all that he doth, or to speak good of his Name, under all our sufferings of evil. Further, to ascribe righteousness to God, is to justifie him, though he give never fo much prosperity to unjust and wicked men (Jer. 12. 1.) Righteons art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee; yet let me talke with thee of thy judgements. Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that dealvery treacheroufly? Some begin to think, furely God is not righteous, when they fee the unrighteous prosper, and at rest, while righteous ones are affileted with continual hurries and croubles; but whatfoever God doth with us or ours, whatfoever peace he gives to wicked men, whatfoever trouble to good men, he is still righteous; and to acknowledge this sincerely, is actually to do what Elihu undertakes to do, even to ascribe righteousness to our Maker. And surely that knowledge will quit the coff, though though we have fetcht it very far, by which we are taught, and have learn'd to ascribe righteousness (for that's the ascribing of glory) to our Maker. I (faith Elibu) will ascribe righteousness

To my Maker.

There's something in that expression very considerable; Elihu doth not say, I will ascribe righteousness to God, but speaks of God under that relation, Hu Maker. The word signifies not on- 500 important Iv in General to make or create, of which work Mofes treats in facere aliquid the first of Genesis, but it notes the doing of a thing, first, with di- cum intentione ligence, secondly, with skill & great intention of mind, tis to draw gia que valde all our spirits together in a work, as Artists do; This divine art or enter in formaskill did chiefly appear and thine forth in the creation or forma-tione hominis. tion of man. Not that God straines himself in any work, but he Bold: speaks thus, to shew that the highest perfections and exactness imaginable, yea beyond all imagination, were centred and laid into the works of God, or the things that he hath made, will ascribe righteousness to

My Maker.

He doth not say, to the Maker of man, or to the Maker of Heaven and Earth, but to my Maker; he appropriates that common work of God to himself. God is the maker of every Creature, the least worme, the least fly is of his making, yet Elihu speaks

of it as his peculiar priviledge, my Maker.

There's a great Emphasis of affection in those Pronounes, Mine, Delicata funt Thine, His. Eliha in this my intimates a friendly sweetness and hac pronomina closeness of relation between God and him, To call another Meum, Tuum, Mine, is more than to call him a friend of mine; And to say, God affections; prois my Maker, is more than to say, He is the maker of me, or the nomen hoc submaker of my foul and body. Tis the Dialect of lovers: Wnom we flantive ponilove we call Ours. It is so in the writings of Heathen Poets and tur pro amico. Orators. One of them faid, I must do this with the gifts of mine, Duliesqu mesthat is, of my friends; and another, I only am my to mine. Much Virgil: Ænilove reignes in this L'anguage of faith up and down the Scrip- ad: 4. tures, chiefly in those raptures of divine delight between Christ Bgo meorum and the Spoule in the Book of Canticles. Elihu is here greatly solus sum meaffected, as with the righteousness of God in all his works, so in 28. Terent: the workmanship bestowed on him : I (saith he) will ascribe night confness to my Makers Hence

Hence Note; First, God is the Maker of man.

I shall not stay upon that. Secondly, In that he holds himself engaged to stand up for God as his Maker.

Note,
The Common benefits of God to man, should be acknowledged, and he honoured for them.

God hath made man and beast, and he preserves man and beast. A godly man fees peculiar mercy to him in both, though they be common mercies. General mercies should have, they highly deserve, special remembrances. All the works of God are to be lookt to as personal engagements. God hath made others as well as thee, yet so remember him to be thy Maker, as if he had made none but thee; and indeed every one that is made, is as much beholding to God, as if he alone had been made. As some things which are made in common for all men (the Sun, the Air, &c.) are so made, that no man could have more of them than he hath, if they had been made for him only: So though it be common to all men, that God is their Maker, yet no man could have more in his making, if none had been made but he. One of the Ancients represents all the Creatures offering themselves to man, in general, and speaking these three words: First, Receive us cheerfully, for we were made for thee; Secondly, Render thanks for ms daily, for we are all made useful unto thee; Thirdly, Take heed you do not abuse us, for you must give an account to our Maker and yours, how you have used us. And furely, as we should strive to honour God for all things which he hath made, so mostly for our own making. The Lord is often (in the Old Testament especially) spoken of under this Relation (Plat. 121.2.) Our belp standeth in the Name of the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth. (So Pfal. 124.8. Pfal. 95.6. P[al. 146.6.) Still God is remembred as the Maker of all things; and he is thus remembred, not only in opposition to Idols, or false gods, who are gods made by man, not the makers of man, but God is thus remembred and recorded in Scripture, to preserve a grateful memory of Godin man, as he is the Maker of man. He that forgets God as his Maker, will never remember, much less answer

Accipe, Redde, Cave. answer and accomplish the ends for which he was made. Thirdly, I will ascribe righteousness to

My Maker.

Note, A godly man takes God as his own, and appropriates him by Faith in all his Relations.

Faith takes not only a share in God, but all of God; My God, my Eather, my Maker, my Redeemer, are strains of Faith. A Believer doth as it were ingross God to himself, yet defires and endeavours, that all, as well as himself, may have their part and portion in God, yea God for their Portion. Job said (Chap. 19.25.) I know that my Redeemer liveth: He spake as if he had got a Redeemer, not only to, but by himself. Thus also holy Paul of Christ, (Gal. 2.22) Who loved me, of gave himself for me; as if he had been given for him alone, and loved none but him. This is the highest work of Faith, and 'cis the fignification of our hottest love to God, it shews endearedness of affection to him, as well as neerness and clearness of interest in him, when we thus take him as our own Saviour, Father, Maker. I will ascribe righteonsness to my Maker.

Observe, Fourthly; He who is the Maker of all men, can be unrighteous to no man, nor is lyable to the censure of any man, whatever

Tis impossible that he who made us should wrong or injure us, and that upon a twofold Principle; First, Of the respect he hath for Justice towards all those whom he hath made. God is so tender, that he doth not willingly (or with his heart) afflitt, nor grieve the children of men, to crush under his feet all the Prisoners of the earth (Lam. 3.33,34.) much less will he (as it followeth, vers. 35, 36.) turn away the right of a man before the face of the most High, that is, before his own face, who is the Most High: As if it had been faid, The Lord will not pervert Judgment in any mans Case, that comes before him. Or, if we take those words before the face of the Most High, as denoting the highest Judicatory on Earth, as our Margin intimates, putting there, for Most High, A Superiour; then the meaning is, The Lord doth not approve, that

Note, Fifthly;

what seever God doth with us, or others, we ought to maintain

the honour of God, and retain good thoughts of him, both as

righteens and good.

Though Heaven and Earth be moved, though the World be full of confusion and unrighteousness, yet we must ascribe righteousnesse to God. Whatsoever or whosoever falls to the dust, the Honour and Justice of God must not. Thus far of Elibu's third Argument for attention; the Fourth is at hand in the next verse.

others

Vers. 4. For truly my words shall not be false; be that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.

As if he had said, I am purposed to speak the truth, and nothing but the truth; therefore hear me. Truly my words stallast be false. He gives affurance for, or warrants the truth of his words, while he faith, they shall not be false. Negatives in Scripture often carry a firong affirmation. The Father of a Fool hack no joy, faith Sold- Non of bonum, mon (Prov. 17. 21.) that is, he shall have a great deal of forrow. pro passimum When the Scripture denyeth forgivenels to any fort of impeni- minsturei, e. tent sinners, or saith, their sin shall not be forgiven, the Sense is, junierur. they shall be punished. When we say proverbially, Goods ill got- Drus. ten shall not prosper, the meaning is, they shall perill, and do him mischief that hath gotten them; not only shall he not thrive with them, but they shall ruine and undoe him; his goods iff gotten, shall do him no good when the evill day is come, much less shall they be able, or he by them, to prevent the coming of an evil day. Once more: When we say, Such a thing is not ill done, our intendment is, its very well done, excellently done. So here, when Elihu faith, Truly my words shall not be faile, his meaning is, I will speak truth, and truth to the highest, I will speak nothing but what shall endure the Touchstone and the Test; I will not offer thee a Syllable of fallhood; what I alledge and urge either for God, or against thee, shall not be fercht or hammer'd out of my own brain, and so subject to errour and mistake, but fuch as God, who cannot erre (by whose Spirit, and in whose stead, I speak unto thee) hath inspired me with, or taught me for thy conviction and instruction.

Fourthly, When he faith, Truly, my words shall not be false, we may take it two wayes: First, As to the matter spoken; Secondly, As to the mind of the Speaker: when truth is thus spoken, tis truly spoken; thus much Eliha engag'd for: As it he had said, The matter that I speak, shall be true, and I will speak it in truth, er with a true mind and heart; I will not speak any thing to flatter thee, nor for my own ends, to trouble thee; my words shall be candid and fincere, as well as found and orthodox: I will speak the truth, and speak it in truth. Some speak that which is faile (as I may fay) in the fincerity of their heart, thinking it to be true; and

others speak truth in the falseness of their heart, that is, they have some by ends in speaking it; from both those Eliha here clears himself, and with both these Job had taxed his Friends, Chap. 13.
7. Chap. 17. 5.

Hence observe; It is the highest Commendation of a Speaker, to speak truth, and the higher the Truth, the higher the Commendation of the Speaker.

Words can have no greater beauty, nor richer ornament, than Truth, and Truth is never more adorn'd, than by plainness of Speech, nor more beautiful, than when (like our first Parents in innocency) 'tis naked. To speak truly, is much more honourable, than to speak eloquently; one plain word of plain truth, is better than a long painted Oration, tinctured with the least errour What then are long Orations, and large Volumes, which have, upon the matter, as many errours as words, as many lyes and flatteries, as Periods and Sentences! at best, some in putting off their words, do as others in putting off their wares, mingle good and bad together. 'Tis dangerous to make such medlies. As we must not put bad for good, darkness for light, bitter for sweer, falshood for Truth, so we must not blend or put bad among the good, nor mix darkness with light, nor falshood with Truth. And as 'tis dangerous to mix any fallhood of Doctrine with Truth, fo to mix falthood of Heart, with Truth of Doctrine, or to speak-Truth, but not in truth. The Apostle is zealous in pro-esting against fallhood, and professing for the Truth, in both these respects; First, as to the truth of the Dect ine, or of the matter fpoken, (2 Cor. 2. 17.) We are not as many, which corrupt (or deal deceitfully with) the Word of God; we do not adulterate or mix it with our own imaginations or inventions; which he further confirms (Chap. 4. 2.) We have renounced the hidden things of dishonisty, &e. Secondly, As he spake truth of Doctrine, so he spake it in the truth of his heart, as he assured the Corinthians, in both the places last mentioned; we are, not only no corrupters of the Word of God, but as of lincerity (there's truth of heart) as of God, in the fight of God, Speak we in Christ. And again, we walk not in craftiness, nor handle the Word of God deceisfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commend our selves to every mans Confeience,

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science, in the fight of God. He makes a protest yet once more in the same tenour, and somewhat higher, (2 Cor. 13.8.) We can do nothing against the Truth; O blessed Imposency! but for the Truth; Obleffed Ability! Who would not be weak against the Truth? who would not be strong for the Truth, which is strongest of all, and will prevail? And as we should speak nothing against the Truth; so nothing but the Truth, nothing beside the Truth, nothing that may be any blemish, or turn to the least disservice of the Truth; yea, though it should be (as we hope) for the service of that excellent and amiable thing called Peace; a thing so excellent, that we cannot over-bid, nor pay too much for it, unless we part with, and pay away truth for it: and if ever we do so, we over-bid for ir, and over-buy it indeed, and shall have cause at last to repent of our bargain, and cry our, we have burnt our Fingers, and it would be well if that were all. Therefore let us remember the Lords admonition by his Propher (Zech. 8. 19.) Love the Truth and Peace: First, Truth, then Peace. Not was there ever any true Lover of Truth, that was not also a Lover of Peace; nor any true Lover of Peace, but was such a Lover of Truth, that he could lay down, or let go, his Peace for it. One of the Ancients tells us, There ought to be fo great a love of Truth Tanus fir in te in us, that, what sever we say to be true, should be as much as if reritatis amor, we had support it to be true as had delivered in what support it guicequid dewe had sworn it to be true, or had delivered it upon Oath. weris, juratum There is no more goodness in what we say, than there is Truth in putes. Hieron, what we say. A Lye in report of Discourse, and a Lye in Doctrine or Dispute, are both abominable to God, and should be so to man; therefore Eliha heartily disclaims it, Truly my words shall not be falle.

He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.

This Affertion fuits well with the fore-going Proteflation: חוץ שומרו ביותר He that is perfect in knowledge, will not, cannot urrer words of langer frientsfalshood. But who is that? and where to be found? Some un ger scientis. derstand it of God; He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee, Heb. that is, God is with thee in this bufiness; and without all controversie, ir may be said of God, in the highest and strictest sense of Perfection, He is perfect in knowledge. The Lord is a God of knowledge (1 Sam. 2. 3.) as well as a God of mercy; he is a knowing, as he is merciful, perfect in both. Taking the Text the

'is as if Elihuhad said, Thou hadst need, O Job, look to thy self, and diligently attend to what is spoken, for thou hast not to do with man, with one like thy felf only, but thou hast to do with God. Some insit much, yea, altogether upon this Interpretation of the word; God is with thee, therefore receive truth; God cannot be deceiv'd, nor doth he deceive, therefore hearken and obey. Yet Elibio might speak thus with respect to the message brought by himself; for when man speaking in the Name of God speaks the mind of God to us, it may be said, God is with us, and speaks to us by him. The Apostle saich (2 Cor. 13. 5.) If any require a Sign or Tolen of Christ speaking in me. Christ speaks, while his Messengers and Ministers speak truth. The same Apostle testified of the The Salomans, that they took his speaking as Gods speaking, (1 Theff. 2. 13.) When ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but (as it is in truth) the Word of God. And therefore I conceive we are to understand the words of Elihu concerning Elihu himself, yet not as in himself, but as fitted for, and assisted in the work by God, He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee; As if he had faid, Though I am but a young man, yet thou hast not to deal with an ignorant man, with one who is but a novice or smatterer in the things of God, with one that is yet in the Elements of Divine knowledge and learning; He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee. And it is conceived that Elibu speaks thus in the third person for Modesties sake, as the Aroftle Paul also did (a Cor. 12.2, 3.) I knew a man in Christ, erc. He doth not fay, I Paul was eaught up to the third Heaven, and keard unspeakable words, &c. but I knew such a man. Thus Elibu here; and doub less, he had been lyable to censure, as arrogating too much to himself, had he spoken in the first person, I that am perfect in knowledge am with thee: Therefore he covers and conceals himself by expressing it in the third person, He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee; that is, He that is with thee to convince thee of thy former errour, and to give thee better counse!, is perfect in knowledge.

But is that true? was Eliba, or is any man perfect in knowledge, or (as the Hebrew ha hit plurally) in knowledges, that is, in all kinds of knowledge, or in all the degrees of knowledge of any kind? Surely, No man is perfect in the knowledge of any one thing, much less of all things, (1 Cor. 13.9, 121) We know in

party

part, and prophese in part, we see but darkly, Grc. How then can it be said of Elihu, He is perfect in knowledge? I answer; There is a twofold perfection. First, Absolute. Secondly, Comparative. There's no man living here below hath absolute perfection of knowledge; yet one man being compar'd with another, may be faid to be perfect in knowledge, another not : There are various degrees of knowledge in man; the highest degree of knowledge compar'd with the lowest, may be call'd perfect knowledg. Thus we are to understand Elihu speaking at the rate of a creature, not of God, or as becomes and is commensurable with the state of man in this life, whose best perfection in knowledge, is to know

his own imperfections.

Secondly, Eliha speaks not of any perfection of knowledge, but of being perfect, that is, fincere, in knowledge. As if he had faid, What I know, I know with an honest, upright heart and intention : I do not know to abuse thee or others, I make not use of my knowledge to deceive the simple, but to inform them. Some are crafty and cunning in knowledge, not perfect in it; they are knowing as the Devil is knowing, who takes his name Damon from his knowledge, yet he is not perfect, but corrupt in his knowledge, he is fubril, and full of devices to do mischief with his knowledge. That's perfect knowledge, which is fincerely imployed for the Glory of God, and the good of those with whom we have to do. So then, the meaning of Elihu may be fumm'd up thus in flort; He that is with thee (that is my felf) will deal with thee to the best of my understanding, and in the Integrity of my beart. This also fuits well with the former part of the verse, Truly my words shall not be false.

Hence Nore: First, Though no man knoweth all things, yet somekrow much more than others.

One is a Babe, and needs milk; another is a grown Christian, and can, not only receive, but give the strong meat of instruction, (Heb. 5.13, 14.) Some cannot understand wildome, when spoken by the perfect, they know not how to learn, yes, some (as the Apostle speaks, 2 Tim. 3.7.) are ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Others can speak wisdome among them that are perfect (2 Cor. 2. 6.) that is, they are got to the highest Form of Gospel knowledge, and are fit to be Teachers.

Secondly, Note;
Whether we know little or much, this is the perfection of our know-ledge, honeftly to imploy and improve it, for the information

of the ignorant, and the conviction of these who are in erroar.

If we have but one Talent of knowledge, yet if we use it well, we are perfect in knowledge. They who have digged (as they think) to the heart, and dived to the bottom of all Sciences, yea into the heart of the Scriptures too, yet if they keep their knowledge to themselves, or know only for themselves, if they have base ends and by respects, in vending their knowledge, if they trade with their knowledge for self only, or to do mischief to others, their knowledge is not only utterly imperfect, bur, as to any good account, nothing, or none at all. As he that slothfully hides his Talent, so he, who either vain-gloriously shews it, or deceitfully useth it, shall be numbred among those who have none, (Math. 25. 29. Luke 8. 18.)

Lastly, Elihu speaking of himself in a third person, Note,

Modesty is a great vertue, and the grace of all our Graces.

He that faith, I am perfect in knowledge, knoweth not what is neerest him, himself. We should use our knowledge as much as we can, but show it as little as we can, unless in the using of it. Tis best for us to take little notice of our own goodness, and not to know our own knowledge. Usually they have but little, who are much in shewing (unless much called to it) what they have. Empty Vessels sound most, and shallow Brooks make the loudest noyse in passage. Moses put a Vail upon his sace, as unwilling to have that Divine beauty seen. While we are provoked, and even necessitated to discover our knowledge, we should cover our selves. It is our duty to impart our knowledge, but our folly to proclaim it.

Thus far Elihu hath been preparing his Patient Job, to receive his Medicinal instructions; he is now ready to administer them,

for the cure and quieting of his distempered mind.

JOB, Chap. 36. Verf. 5, 6.

5. Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any:

he is mighty in strength and wisdome.

6. He preserveth not the life of the wicked: but giveth right to the poor.

Lihu having done prefacing, proceeds to the matter of his Ediscourse, wherein he giveth a large description, of the power, wildome, and justice of God, in his disposure and government of the world; First, In things Civil, which he prosecutes to the 26th verse of this Chapter. Secondly, In things Natural, which he handles to the 23d verse of the following Chapter. He begins in these two verses, with an excellent Elogium, or with the high praise of God in his divine perfections, into which he leads us with a command of attention, or ferious confideration, yea of wonder and admiration.

Vers. 5. Behold, God is mighty.

I have feveral times opened the fenfe and intendment of this word Behold, and therefore will not stay upon it here; But what Mignan granare we to behold? what is the fight which Elihu represents to our du, potens, id faith? it is God in his might; Behold, God is mighty. God is off potentiffistrong, potent, omnipotent, God is mighty, yea Almighty: The will. words are a plain affertion of that royal Attribute, the Mightiness or Almightiness, the Potency or Omnipotency of God Elihu promised to ascribe righteousness unto God his Maker, yet here he begins with his Mightiness; and this we find often both ascribed to God, and afterted by him. When, God made a Covenant with Abraham, he thus offers himself to his faith, though by another Word in the Original, (Gen. 17.1.) I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect, or upright, or fincere, (as our Margin reads it) The same title is again repeated by Isaac, when he dispatcht his son Jacob with a blessing to Padan-Aram, to avoyd the fury of his brother Esan, (Gen. 28. 3.) Thus also spake the blessed Virgin, (Luke 1. 49.) He that is mighty bath done to me great things, and holy is his Name. The holy Scrip-

tures every where exalt the name of God by this glorious Attribute; The mighty God, even the Lord hath spoken, (Psal. 50.1.) And he seems even to delight in this title, The mighty God of Jacob. Jacob was mighty with God in prayer, as a Prince he had power with God and prevailed; and God loved and loves to put torth his might for Jacob, his Church and people, in answer of their prayers. But I shall not stay in general upon this title, only opening it a little, shall make some inferences from it. God is mighty in a two-fold notion.

First, In authority, or in command; he commands in chief; God is Soveraigne and Supreame; the Legislative power is in his hand, he gives Lawes, and he gives the Law to all the world, (Psal. 62. 11.) Once bath he spoken, and I heard it twice, that power (Soveraignity, Law-giving power) belongs to God; He is so mighty in this governing power, that he doth not only give Lawes to rule Nations, but he disposeth of all the Rulers in Nations, (Daniel Chap. 2. 21. Chap. 4. 17.) And again, (Psal. 22. 28.) The Kingdome is the Lords, and he is the Governour among the

Nations.

Secondly, Beades this power of Authority, which the Lord exerciseth paramount over all the world, he hath also another power or might; he hath the might of Strength, as well as the might of Authority. Some have a great, a mighty Authority, but they have little or no might to make good that Authority; they cannot effect or carry on what they commind, how much right foever they have to command, yea how just and right foever that is which they command: they have Authoritive might, yet want Executive might, they cannot bring about, nor issue what they determine. But when Elihu afferts, Behold, God is mighty, we are to take it under both notions, he is mighty, as he hath the whole Legislative power in his hand, and he is mighty, as having also the whole Executive power in his hand. The fons of men are jealous about these two Powers, and labour to keep them in diflinet hands, that they who have the Legislative power, may not have the Executive power also, as fearing what they would do were they vested with both : But God (beyond all dispute) hath both powers in himfelf, and it is impossible they should be taken from him, or devolved upon any others, otherwise than himself pleaseth, or permitteth; behold and wonder, God is mighty, (and (and O how mighty is God!) in the union of these two powers; and to set forth yet surther the wonder of his might, I shall give you seaven brief propositions, or affertions, concerning the might of God, as it is twisted and made up of these two mights or

First, He is so mighty both in strength and power, that all the might which is in the creature, all the Legislative might, and all the Executive might, all the Authority, and all the ability which is in any man, is from him, and by him; that's it, which is said, (Pro. 8. 15.) By me Kings reigne, and Princes decree Justice; they have both their Authority, and their power to execute that Authority from me; every kind and degree of might (whatsoever it is) is but a derivation, a rivolet, from the Might and Power

of God, that's the fountaine, the spring of all.

Secondly, Behold the mightiness of God, as in giving, so in taking away power, whether the power of authority or of strength, from the sons of men; He taketh away might from the mighty. Sometimes such power, such authority, such command is put into the hands of others, that they who put it there, know not how to get it out again, but are mastered and over-power'd with the very power, which they trust others with; but such is the might of God, that whatever might of authority or strength he hath trusted or cloathed any of the Princes or Powers of this world with, he can presently take it out of their hands again, (Psal. 75.7.) God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth ap another; and it is as easie with him to put down, as it is to set up; as he can make the weak strong, so he can presently make the strong weak; this is the glory of the might of God, he can take away power, as well as give it.

Thirdly, Behald, God is mighty, for, he can do whatseever pleaseth him; Certainly, he is Almighty that can do so; He whose power runs paralel with his will, he who can act as far as he desires, how mighty is he! none of the mighty ones of this world can do this. Oh, what work would some men make in the world, if they could do as much as they defire, if their power should alwayes extend, as far as, or be commensurate with their Will; yet thus it is with God. The Scriptures of truth are clear in it, (Psal. 115.3.) where, when some prophane wretches had scoffed and jeered the people of God, with where is your God?

they presently answer, Our God is in heaven, and he bath done what soever pleaseth him. It is not what this man pleaseth, or what that man pleaseth, or what this fort or gange of men please, but what the Lord pleaseth, that is done, (and that he doth well, how ill soever men do it) both in heaven and in earth. The Lord will not do all that he can, for he could by his power reduce this world to its first principles, a Chaos, or into a nothing, as it was before that, but he can do whatfoever he will; all things are possible to God, yea all things are easie, nothing hard or difficult to God: And we may very well put a behold of admiration upon his might (and such is the might of God,) who can do whatsoever he

willeth.

Fourthly, The Lord is so mighty, that he cando all, without the help of any. Some men are very mighty, but it is with other mens hands, with other mens frrength; let them alone, let them stand by themselves, do but desert and leave them, and what can they do? just nothing. But such is the mightiness of God, the Almightmess of God, that if all second causes, if all persons, powers and Nations should leave him, in that which he intends should be done, he can do it himself without them. The Prophet fetting forth the victory of Christ over his enemies, represents him speaking thus, (Ifa. 63. 3.) I have trodden the wine-prefs alone, and of the people there was none with me. Which though many interpret of his passive conquest by suffering as a Priest, yet most, of his active conquest as a King, which he usually archieveth by himself alone, without any appearance of help from man. And though Deborah in her Song (Judg. 5.) pronounceth a curse upon those that came not out to help the Lord against the Mighty, yet it was not because the mighty God needed their help or service, but because they did owe it him, & in duty should have given it him. For, that the Lord wants no help, is further clear from the Prophet, (Ifa. 59.16.) He fam that there was no man, and wondered that there was no Intercessor, (mone so much as to speak a word) therefore his arme wrought salvation, and his right consness it sustained him. Not only, no arme was put forth to help, but no tongue so much as move or intercede for help to doir, yet his own arme did it. Thus the Propher, (1/a. 44. 24.) He firetcheth forth the Heavens alone, and laid the Foundations of the Earth by bimfelf. Now as it was with the Lord in the work of Creation, he had no helper, no affiftant, he did it alone by himself; so it is as true, as to all works of providence. Let all men fortake him (as the Apostle Paul complained they did him, 2 Tim. 4. 16.) and no man stand by him, yet the Lord (what his purpose and counsel is) can bring to pass alone: O behold this might! he can do all things without the help of any; and not only so, but

Pifthly, God is so mighty, that he can bring all things to pass, or do what he pleaseth, though all creatures should be diffeased, though all men and Angels, though all second causes stand up to hinder and to stop him. The Lord can work his will against every will, against all contradictions and oppositions. Thus the Prophet extols the power of God, (Ifa. 14. 27.) The Lord of Hofts hath purposed, and who shall disanul it? His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back? Where we have, first, the purpose of God, none can disanull that; Secondly, the execution of that purpose, He stretcheth out his hand (to do such or such a thing) who shall turn it back? Let all men and Devils joyn forces and counsels, let them strive to do it, they shall not be able to do it. We have a like confession, (Dan. 4. 35.) He doth according to his will in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, and none can stay his hand, or fay to him, what dost thou! Such is the mightiness of God, that he can work, not only when the creature doth not help him, or when they apostatize from and desert him or his interest, but though they set their hearts and heads, their hands, and their all against him, they cannot stay him, nor hinder his work; I (faith the Lord, 1/4.43.13.) will work, and who shall let it?

Sixthly, Behold, how mighty the Lord is, he is so mighty, that he can do all these things, and never trouble himself in doing of them; he can do all things, and not be weary. We see the mightiest among men, the Powers of this world, how they are toyled, and moyled, how they are worn out, how they sweat and labour, and are ready to faint and tire, in bringing some poor business, some petty project about, or to its issue But the greatest designes which the Lord hath in his heart to do, he can do them, without any wearisonness or trouble at all, (Isa. 40. 28.) Dost not thou know that the Lord is not meary, neither doth he faint: and when the Prophet saith, the Lord is not meary, neither dath he faint, the meaning is not this, the Lord is somewhat weary, only

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he doth not faint, but the meaning is this, he hath not the least wearifomness upon him, no more than a man hath in turning his hand; not only are all things possible to God, or such as he cando, if he put forth the utmost of his power and strength, if he make (as we fay) much adoe, if he lay himself out to the full; not only are things thus possible to God, (which yet arguethwonderfull might) but behold, the Lord is so mighty, that there is nothing difficult unto him. Not only can he possibly do great things, but he can eafily do them, he can do them without the least trouble to himself: There is nothing hard to him, who can do every thing. Mighty men have done great things, but they will tellyou they could hardly do them, they were forced to turn every tione, to Araine every veine of their hearts to do them; whereas the mighty God cando his work with as much eafe, as defire to have it done.

Seaventhly, Behold, God is mighty, so mighty that he can do any thing, but that which will argue that he is not almighty. The Scripture speaks of something which the Lord cannot doe, (Tit. 1. 2.) In hope of eternal life, which God who cannot lye hath promised. And again, the Apostle saith of God, not only making promise but oath to Abraham, (Heb. 6. 18.) That by two Immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lye, the heirs of promise might have strong consolation. Once more, (2 Tim. 2. 13.) If we believe not, yet he abideth faithfull, he cannot deny himself. We have these and such like negative Propositions concerning God, telling us what he cannot do. Now the only reason why it is said, the Mighty God cannot do these things, is because the doing of them would argue him not to be Almighty. To lye is to be weak; to deny himself would affirme his impotency, therefore he cannot do these things, the Lord is so mighty, so strong, that it is impossible for him to do any thing, which should declare any weakness or impotency in him. Thus I have given you seaven asfertions concerning the might of God, all which may very well call for a behold of admiration and aftonishment at the mightiness of God. Take a few Inferences from this grand Affertion.

First, For Comfort.

Secondly, For Terror. Behold, the Lord is Mighty, Almighey; this speaks comfort to the people of God.

First, Surely then he can do whatsoever he hath promised to

do, and if so, then look through the promises and see, whether God hath not promised, to do good things for his people in generall, and for every believer in particular; Behold, the Lord is mighty, these are not vaine words, he can fill up, and fulfill all his promises. As he hath made promises, so he can create performances. Abraham was sully perswaded that what he had promised he was able to performe, (Rom. 4. 21.)

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Secondly, If the Lord be mighty in all those notions forefhewed, then certainly he can do whatfoever we defire him to do according to his will. As God hath not out-promifed his power, fo we cannot out-pray the power, nor out-ask the arme of God; we may quickly out-pray the power of man, and ask what he cannot do; he may fay, I cannot do this for you, it is not in my power: but here is our comfort, if what we pray and ask be good for us to have, if it be just and righteous for him to do, let it be what it will, it is within the compasse of the power of God, who is also ready to performe it for us. The Apostle assureth us of this, (Eph. 4. 20.) He is able to do for us abundantly, above what we ask or think; he cannot only do what we ask, but he can do above what we ask, yea, abundantly above what we ask. How narrow, and short, and poor, are our words and prayers, compared with the power of God) He can do abundantly for us above what we ask, and not only so, but above what we think. If a man should have somewhat in his mind, that he is not able to express, (as the mind is far larger than the tongue,) if a man think what he cannot speak or utter, yet the Lord is of such power, that he can do not only what we think, but abundantly above what we are able to think. How many requests do we put up daily to God in prayer for our persons, for our families, for the Church of God, and about the Kingdoms of men, our own Kingdome especially, is it not matter of fingular comfort, that all these requests are before a Mighty God, a God who can quickly fend down all our prayers in performances, and give us the fruit of all our askings?' Tis an everlasting Spring of comfort and encouragement unto the people of God, both in prayer and unto prayer; they pray to him who is mighty, mighty to do what they pray for.

Thirdly, If God be so might himself that he can do all things, then he is able to give us might to do what he requireth of us if he be mighty enough to do what we ask, then he is highty

enough.

enough to enable us to do what he commands. We ask many things of God, God commands many things at our hands; when we ask, God is mighty to help us to what we ask; and if what we ask be what he commands us, he will surely help us to do what we ask, even whatsoever he commands us to do; he strengthens his people with might by his Spirit in the inner man, (Eph. 3. 16.) Paul could say, (Phil. 4. 18.) I can do all things, through Christ strengthening me; Christ hath strength to do all things, and Christ can make me strong (saith the Apostle) to do all things; Christ hath strength to do all things that he hath a mind to do, and he is strong to strengthen us in and for the doing of all things, that are

according to his mind.

Fourthly, If God be thus mighty to do all things, if he hath all strength, both commanding and executing strength, then as he can give us strength to do all things that he calls us to do, so he hath strength enough to reward us for all we do for him; this is comfortable. Sometimes we work and labour for men, who are not able, they have little power, or if power enough, yet no will at all to reward us for it. But as the Lord is not unrighteous, to forget our labour, (Heb. 6. 10.) so he is not unable, that is, he is infinitely able to reward us. We find the strength of God spoken of to this poynt, (fer. 32. 18, 19.) Thou shewest loving kindness unto thousands, &c. The great, the mighty God, the Lord of Hofts is his Name; Great in counsel, and mighty in working, for thine eyes are open upon all the wayes of the sons of men, to give every one according to his wayes, and according to the fruit of his doings. When the Prophet had afferted, God is mighty in working. he brings it down to this, he is mighty in rewarding us for all our works. Do not think (what labour soever you have taken for the Lord) that you shall want a reward, for the Lord hath treasure and store, strength and power enough, to give you a sufficient recompence for all your labours.

Fifthly, This truth is matter of comfort and encouragement in doing good, not only as 'tis a service to God, but as it is a kind-ness to men, especially to the poor, and more especially to Gods poor. The mightiness of God should move us to be charitable, yea, liberall and bountifull in our charity. The Apostle useth this Argument, (2 Cor. 9. 8.) for having said, God loveth a chearfull giver, he presently adds, God is able to make all grace abound

towards

towards you, that ye alwayes having allsufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work. As if he had said, Be not afraid to give, nor sparing in giving, for God (to whom you lend, when you give to the poor) is a good debter, a fufficient paymaster, and he will pay you, not only in your own, but in better covne, than you lent: he will pay you in spiritualls for your temporalls, in grace for your gold, and that abundantly, both in the grace of his favour shining upon you, as also in the Graces of his Spirit working in you; yea, ye shall have, not only an All-sufficiency in spiritual things, but in all things, which must needs include temporal things; even your Gold and Silver will multiply as Seed, by fowing and scattering it abroad (as he alludes in the 9th verse) so that ye shall (through this ability of God) be enabled to abound in every good work, that is, every good work of Grace, in general; and if you are called to that special good work of Charity again and again, you shall be able to abound in every one of them. Some are doubtful, if they should give freely and liberally, they should lose by it, and be straitned themselves: No, saith the Apostle, I avouch and engage the Almightiness of God for it, if you be cheerful givers, God will shew his All-sufficiency in giving you an All-sufficiency in all things. Here are three or four Alls, promised to those, who give but somewhat in a due manner. Here is, First, all grace; Secondly, All-sufficiency; Thirdly, in all things; and Fourthly, alwayes; and all these grounded upon the mightiness of God: God is able.

Sixthly, God is mighty: Then he can protect us from, support us under, or deliver us out of all those dangers, which we incurre

for his Names fake, (Dan. 3. 17.)

Secondly, Hence we may inferre matter of terrour to the wicked world, the sons of Belial, the mightiest enemies of God. What is the might of sinful man, to the mightiness of God! The meakness of God is stronger than man; what then is his mightiness! We read (Rev. 6. 15.) how, the (Heathen) Kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief Captains, and (which may be the recapitulation of all these) the mighty men, hid themselves in Dens, and said to the Mountains fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth spon the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. The Apossle checks the madness of the Corinthians in sinning, by an intimation of the mightiness of God, against

against whom they sinned (1 Cor. 10. 22.) Do we provoke the Lord to jealousie? Are we stronger than be? As is he had said, What do ye mean? (he speaks to those that would venture to go to the Table of Devils, that is, who cared not how they mingled themselves, and held Communion, in the things of God, with those who worshipped Devil-gods, or (as all Idolaters do) Devils rather than God; what mean you (faith he to these) consider your selves, Will you provoke the Lord? are you stronger than he? are you his match? are you able to graple with him? not fo well as a Child with a mighty Giant, or a Lamb with a Lion. The mightiness of the Lord, his Almightiness, should make sinners tremble, and fear to provoke him; he can crush them as a Moth, and break them in pieces like a Potters Vessel. As 'tis the Joy of all true Believers, that God bath laid help for them (as'tis faid, Pfal. 89.19.) upon one that is mighty, that is, Christ, of whom David was but a shadow; and as 'tis the comfort of the Fatherless, (how weak soever) that their Redeemer is mighty (Prov. 23. 11.) So it may fill the faces of the wicked and prefumptuous with confusion, and their hearts with despairing sorrow, to hear, that God, who is ready to take vengeance on them, is mighty? Behold, God is mighty; that's a glorious fight; and yet behold a fight more glorious, if more glorious may be,

And despiseth not any.

What a temperament is here? God is so mighty that he feareth none, no, not the mightieft, yet so meek, that he despiseth not any, no, not the meanest. Elihu having afferted the mightiness of God, amplifieth it, First, by his gracious condescension and moderation in the use of his mightiness; he is mighty, yet he doth not exercife his might in a proud vaunting or contemning way, he despiseth not any; that's the first thing, in which he amplifies the excellency of God in his mightiness. Secondly, As God is thus mighty, and moderate in the exercise of his might, not despising any; so behold another excellency of this might of God, He is mighty, not only in strength of Arm and Authority, but (as the last words of the verse set him forth)

In strength and misdome;

Or, he is as wife as he is ftrong. Some men have a great deal

of might, and they prefently swell proudly, this spoyls all; others have a great deal of might, but not a bit of wir, or wildome, or understanding, how to dispose or make the best of it: But what a mighty God have we to do with! who is mighty, and de pileth no man; who hath, not only might of firength, but might of wildome too. Thus we fee how Elihu, in this latter part of the verte. advanceth or extolleth the mightiness of God, in these two things. the infinite Moderation and Wildome, that go along with it and act ic. I shall a simle open both. First, his wooderful Moderation in the exercise of his mightiness; He is mighty,

off in the present sex, b hold, God it might and design to be despited not the afficted, not the poor displigable holders

To despite is an act of Pride; Pride is a bad Mother of many bad Children, these three especially. First, coasting of our selves. Secondly, contending with others. Thirdly, despising of others. The word here used signifies to despise with abhorrence or DXD' X7 loathing, as the Stomack doth meat which is offenfive to it; ill favoured mear is loathlome, and any thing which the mind nauseates, is an abhorrence to us. The Lord despiseth not, he doth not nauleate any. The word any is not exprest in the Original Text, that saith only, The Lord is Mighty, and despifeth not; we put that supplement in our Translation, any; He is Mighty, and despiseth not any. Others render more strictly, thus, Behold, God is Mighty, and despiseth not his own people. The Chaldee Paraphrase speaks exegetically, The Lord is mighty, and despiseth not the righteous man. The Greek Version bath a fourth supplement, to the same purpose, God is mighty, and despiseth not the innocent person, the center simpliman free from evillor wickedness : a man of integrity, a min of cem integrum. simplicity, the Lord will not despise : such are often afflicted, but Sept. never despised, especially not as such. Lastly, thus, God is mighty, Eifi, affigantur and despiseth not the mean, the afficted, the poor, or those of low justi, tamen non estate, (Pfal. 22. 24.) He hath not despised, nor abborred, the ideo quia justice of the Mittal and a half the piece. affliction of the afflicted, neither hath be bid his face from him, but when he cryed unto him, he heard. And this feems most proper to the scope and meaning of Elihu here; God is mighty, and desvifeth not those who have no might. Thus the words reflect chiefly upon Job, who at least seemed to charge God, that he did not confider him in his affliction, or in his low efface when he complained and cryed to him. We have two Texts in this Book of Job, which might

might very well move Elihu to speak thus unto him; though God be mighty, yet be despiseth not the afflisted, or the poor. Job said (Chip. 10.3.) Is it good to thee that thou shoulds oppress, that thou shouldst despise the work of thy hands, and shine upon the Counfell of the wicked? As if he had said to God, Thou seemest to despise me; the work of thy hand, now that I am psor, low, and reduced, as it were, to dust. Again (Chap. 19.7.) we have neer the same Inguage, Behold, I ery out of wrong, but I am not heard, I cry aloud, but there is no Judgment. As much as to say, I am despised and neglected, I am not regarded when I cry. This Elihu takes off in the present Text, Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any; he despiseth not the afflicted, nor the poor, when they cry unto, and call upon him; and therefore in this, O Job, thou hast mishehaved thy self, or spoken amis.

But which-soever of these supplements we take, the sense is good, and the Proposition true, he despiset hoot; what will he not despise? we say, not any; a second, his own; a third, the Just; a fourth, the Innocent; a fifth, the afflitted (there is a fixth, which I shall offer before I part with these words) All these are true,

God despiseth not.

Hence Note;
First, Though the Lord be infinitely more mighty than the mightiest of men, yet he doth not despise any man;

He doth not despise man in general, who is the work of his hand; yea, fob faid once (Chap. 14. 15.) I hon wilt have a defire to the work of thy hand. The Lord dorn not despile any of his works, as they are his works, or as they come out of his hand; and therefore when Jonah feemed to fet to low a face upon the Ninivites, who were the work of his hand, his Creatures, the Lord reproved him for it, by the Gourd, which when the Lord smote, Jonah was angry; but faid the Lord, Doft thou well to be angry for thy Goard? I Hast thou mercy upon a Gourd, and should not I spare this City, wherein are more than fix score thousand persons, that know not their right hand from their left, and also much Cattle? The Lord did not despise, but pity them. Go through all the forts of men, the Lord despiseth none ; the Lord despiseth not great men, because great (which will come to a further confideration, upon another Translation of the Text) nor mean,

mean men, because mean; he despiseth not men in prosperity, because they are rich and prosperous, nor doth he despisemen in adverfity, because poor and unprosperous. He despiseth nor any upon any of these accounts; the Lord despiseth none but the wicked, and the ungodly, the unbeliever and the impenitent, and all them he despiseth, and them he ever will despise, how great, how high, how mighty, how rich soever they are; the Lord despileth them, and he will alwayes despise them. He doth not despise any man because a great man, if he be not a wicked great men; and let men be never so poor or low, the Lord looks not didainfully upon them because they are so; God doth not despise any man because he is in a bad case, he only despiseth men, because their ease or Cause is bad, and, then he will despise them, let them be who or what they will. Such is the goodness of God, and this goodness is his Glory, That although the highest and greatest of men, are but as worms to him, or not so much to him as the dust of the Ballance, or the drop of the Bucket, yet he despiseth not any, no,

not the lowest and least of men.

Secondly, When the Text faith, he desp seth not, there is more in it than is exprest. We may take it affirmatively, God gives all forts of men due regard and favour, he takes care of them, and bestows suitable mercies upon them, even upon the meanest and poorest of them: if they be his, if they be faithful and godly, how doth the Lord own them! how doth the Lord honour them! how doth the Lord embrace and lay them in his bosome, though they lye upon the Dunghil, as Job did! As when we are warned not to despise the chastnings of the Lord (Heb. 12.5.) we are taught to take them in good part; and as when the Apostle admonisheth us (1 Theff. 5. 20.) not to despise Prophesse, his meaning is not only this, that he would not have us flight ir, and throw it at our heels, but he would have us give it due esteem, and honour it as one of our choycest mercies, he would have us set a great price upon it, and bless God heartily for it. So here, when Elihusaith The Lord despiseth not any, his purpose is to shew, that he respects and favours men according to their condition, but mod his own faithful and obedient Servants. This Interpretation may give us another Instruction:

God bath a due regard and respect to all sorts and conditions of men.

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· Having

Dicitur Deus ignis confuuniverja sibi di fimilia deverat ac confumat ; fed fibi similia comple-

Having made all mer, he doth not throw them up to the wide world, much less trample upon them himself; but owns them, preferveth them, warcheth over them all. And as for this special reople, he tends them as a Nucle her infant, or as a Father tenders his children; he counsels them, he guides them, he directs and leads them, he supports and comforts them, he carries them through this world, as it were in his own armes, as the Eagle carries her young ones upon her wings. The Lord is a consuming stons, quonium fire to burn up the wicked, those that are unlike him, and like him not; but he is a warm Sur, to cherish, and a safe-guarding Shield, to protect those that fear him and trust in his Name: He indeed will be as a refining Fire, to fetch out and consume the dross that he fees in his people, and as a trying Fire (by affliction) to their Bitur, Brent. Graces (as Febs case was) But when he is so, and doth so, he is so far from despising them, that he honours them, and makes them more honourable. And therefore having made Promise of being with his people when they should be called to walk through the fire (Ifa. 43. 2.) he presently subjoyns, (vers. 4.) Since thou mast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable. As if he had faid, Since thou haft given a proof that thou art good Metal, and that thou hast lost and less nothing in the fire of affliction, but thy drofs, I both honour thee my felf, and will cause others to honour thee also.

Again, He despiseth not any. Elibu in this fers out the honour of God, he puts this as a Crown of Glory upon the head of his

Power. God is mighty, yet be despiseth not any.

Hence Note; To be mighty in Power, and meek in Spirit, shews an excellent God-like Spirit.

As God is great, so good; both are equally essential to him: goodness, gentleness, and meekness, meet together and are marcht with greatness and mightiness in God, (Nahum 1, 8,) The Lord is great in Power, and stow to anger; he is not presently in a flame with finners, but waiteth to be gracious. Fury is not in me, (faith the Lord, Ifa. 27. 4, 5.) I do not presently execute my power, because great in power. Who would set the Bryars and Thorns against me in battel? I would go thorow them, and burn them together; or let him take hold of my strength, and make peace mith me, and he shall make peace with me. As if he had said, If finners, of one fort or other, who are to me, or to my people, like Bryars and Thorns, vexing and troubling both me and them, should take the boldness to contend with me, I could quickly rid my hands of them, even as soon as fire can consume Bryars and Thorns sully dry; yet I rather advise them to humble themselves, and humbly make suit for peace, and they shall not find me inexorable, though I am invincible; they may have Peace for the asking, though I fear not at all the issue of the War. Othat the mighty men of the World, would strive to imitate this overture of the mighty God: But oh how unlike are the most of the mighty men of this World to God!

First, Some mighty men of this World rather pride themselves that they can do hurr, than please themselves, that they may do good with their might. (Psal. 52. 1.) Why boastest then O mighty man, that thou canst do mischief? that thou canst tread and trample upon others? this thy boast should be thy shame. Mighty men are apt to despise all men (upon the matter) that are below them, that are their underlings; but why dost thou boast, O thou mighty man, seeing (as it followeth in the Psalm) the goodnesse of God (who is mightier than thou) endureth continually.

Secondly, How unlike are they to God, who having might and power in their hand, despise the mean, and the oppressed, who come to them for Justice! Such are not like God, the Judg of all mer, but like that Judge, whose Character was (Luke 18.2.) He feared not God, nor regarded man; he despised all; what cared he for them, or their tears, so he might serve his own turn, and carry on his own ends? Woe to the mighty, who despise the Cause, much more who despise the cryes of the oppressed.

Thirdly, The mighty men of the earth usually despise those whom God honoureth most. God despiseth not any, but he highly esteemeth his own; whereas the mighty men of the World are apt to despise all, especially his, that is, the Generation of the righteous; they that are nearest to Gods heart, are farthest from theirs. The assections and estimations of the mighty, seldome fall in with, but tun cross to Gods, (Psal. 10.3.) He blesseth the Covetous, whom God abhors; that is, he hath a high esteem of those, whom God cannot abide; and he that doth so, will never abide.

alwayes lowest in the thoughts of the unholy.

Fourthly, They that are mighty in Parts and Gifts of speech and knowledge, they who are got a Form higher than their Brethren, how apt are they to despise all that are below them ! Nor is this the fin of carnal vain men only, but of many (for the main) good men also, who taking too much notice of their own great Abilities, will scarce take any notice of them who have but little. This dead Fly hath corrupted many a Box of precious Ointment; this Weed hath been found growing in the richest grounds; and the richer any ground is, the more apt it is to bring forth this Weed, unless the Lord, with those other Gifts, give also that which is more excellent than all Gifts, even than the Tongue, yea Head of men and Angels, an humble and felf-denying heart. St Paul himself was in danger to be lifted up (and certainly had, if God had not given him preventing Physick) with this diftemper, through the abundance of Revelations; now, he that is lifted up in himself, is within a step of despising others. And O how unlike are these in this also to God, who is mighty, not only in frength, but in wisdome, yet despiseth not any ! And, that God who is mighty and despiseth not any, is mighty, not only in Arength, but in wildome, is Eliku's Affertion also concerning God, in the close of this verse, and comes next to be opened and handled.

He is mighty in strength and wisdome.

The Original may be thus rendred strictly; He is mighty, the strength of heart: Now, the strength of the heart consists, sirel, in courage;

courage; secondly, in wisdome; and hence we translate distinctively. He is mighty in strength and wisdome. Here are two poynts of Gods might according to our reading: He is mighty, First, in strength; Secondly, in wisdome. As before we had that Noble combination of Mightiness & Meekness in God, He is mighty and despiseth not any; so here we have another noble combination, in his mightiness, of strength and wisdome; He is mighty in strength and in wisdome. Some men are mighty in strength, who are weak in wisdome; others are mighty in wisdome, but not in strength; both meet and are joyned in God (in whom all things are but one, he being but an infinite simplicity, though they are acted diversly towards man, both these (I say) meet in God) and he equally excels in both.

Yet because, if these two be taken distinctly, we can understand nothing in God by strength, but what was comprehended in mightiness before spoken of, therefore I conceive, these words, He is might yin strength and wisdome, signifie no more in this place than this, That God is mighty in the strength of wisdome, or that he is mighty strong in wisdome. And so I shall proceed

with the Text.

This strength of the wisdome of God, or his strong wisdome, is of two sorts, or consists in a two-fold wisdome. First, there is his knowing and discerning wisdome. Secondly, there is his govern-

ing and disposing wisdome.

First, There is a strength of wisdome in knowing and discerning: God is mighty strong in this wisdome, in this knowing, this discerning wisdome, (1 Sam. 2. 3.) The Lord is a God of knowledge, by him actions are meighed; He knoweth our actions exactly, and he will weigh them to a grain, he knoweth our actions to the utmost. And as he knoweth our actions, so our intentions; he knoweth our inside as well as our outside, (Heb. 4. 13.) All things are naked and manifest before him, with whom we have to do; and they are not only naked to the skin, but unbowelled, and anatomized to every veine and bone, (Acts 15.18.) Known to God are all his works from the beginning of the world; he knoweth all his own works, much more ours. Thus God is strong in wisdome, as wisdome consists in knowledge; and thus strong he is, he knoweth all things; Pirst, the least things, as well as the greatest; its no burden, no distraction to God, to take notice of

the smallest matters, even to the numbering of the haites of our head. That's true greatness of knowledge, to know the least things and motions of the meanest creature. Secondly, he knoweth the most secret things; Secret things belong to God, (Dent. 29. 29.) that is, God bath fecrets which he referves to himfelf, man cannot know them, man must not attempt to know them, such an atrempt were insufferable intrusion. Now as God hath secrets of his own, which no man must meddle with, so he medses with all our fecrets, our fecrets belong to God as well as his own; he knows the secrets of our hearts, he hath a key to that Cabinet, and can unlock ir, and look into it; we may lock men, one and other, out of our hearts, but we cannot lock out God, he feeth what's there, such is the strength of his knowing wildome. Thirdly, He knows things future, or what shall be; he knoweth what as yet is not, as clearly as what is; He declareth the end from the beginning, (112. 46. 10.) Upon this ground the Prophet challengeth all the Idols of the world, (Ifa. 41.23.) Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods; tell us what shall be next, tell us what will be to morrow; that will be a demonstration of your Divinity; the Lord declareth things to come, and he only declares them. We know little of that which is, he, and he only, knoweth that which will be. All futures unrevealed, are fecrets, and among them our thoughts are the greatest secrets, yet them the Lord knoweth, (Pfal. 139. 2.) Thou (faith David) understandest my thoughts afar off, that is, before I think them; Is not this strength of knowing wisdome? Fourthly, God knoweth all things alwayes, or everlastingly, there is not one of them flips out of his knowledge, they are at all times alike, that is, perfectly before him; Is not this also strength of knowing wisdome? Fifthly, The Lord knoweth all these things as distinctly as if he had but one thing to know. Sixthly, He knoweth all things by one act of fingle and fimple intuition, he doth not know (as we) by report from others, nor by comparing one thing with another, nor by inferring one thing from another, that is, he doth not know by discourse, argument, or demonstration, but all things are before the eye of his knowledge nakedly and immediately, as they are. These two last as well as any of, or all the former, are a clear proof, not only, that God is knowing and wife, but that he is mighty in strength of knowing wisdome. Secondly,

Secondly, Consider wisdome, as it is applyed in working. Some have much of that wisdome which we call Theoreticall, knowing, discerning wisdome; but as for practicall, working wisdome, how to put things together, how to order them as to the businesses and affairs of this life, they are very far to seek. We far, Great Scholars are not alwayes the wifest men: many are knowing. they know almost all things, they will dispute (de omni scibili) of all things knowable, yet are very weak when they come to lay things together for practice or government; if it be but the government of a family, or of their private estate, they know not how to mannage ir, much less can they mannage the government of great Societies or Corporations, least of all of Kingdomes and Nations. But as for the Lord, he hith not only a knowing wifdome, but a disposing, a governing, a working, practical wildome, in ordering all affairs, which we properly call prudence or difcretion, (Pfal. 112.5.) We have seen knowing learned men do things very foolishly, imprudently, indifcreetly. But all the works of the Lord are contrived and model'd, as also effected and perfected with infinite wisdome. Hence that Hely exclamation, (Pfal. 104. 24.) O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdome hast thou made them all? Which as it is true of all the works of Creation, so likewise of the works of Providence, the former of which are spoken of in the beginning of the Psalme, and the latter in the following parts of it. The Lord in wisdome made the world, He made the heavens by his wisdome, (Pial. 136.5.) and by wisdome bath he founded the earth, (Pio. 3. 19) If in both those places we understand Christ by wisdome, it doch not hinder, but advance this truth; now as the Lord made the world both heaven and earth in wisdome, so in and by the same wisdome he governs heaven and earth, and all his works in both are full of wildome. Thus it appears that the Lord is mighty in strength of wisdome, both as to the knowing and ordering of all things; yea, the Lord is fo mighty in both these kinds of wisdome, that there is indeed none wife but he. And therefore the Scripture not only calls him, The wife God, but God only wife, (Rom. 16. 27. Jude v. 25.) And furely he is mighty strong in wisdome, who hash all the wisdome, or is only wife. Some may fay, How are we to understand that? is not wisdome one of those communicable Attributes of God? so we distinguish the divine Attributes, some are communicable, Aa

nicable, others are incommunicable. The infiniteness, the omnificience, the unchangableness, the simplicity of God are incommunicable, but the holiness, the justice, the mercy and wisdome of God, are communicable; that is, God doth communicate unto man his holiness, his justice and wisdome. Why then is it said, That God is only wife, seeing God hath endowed many with a spirit of wisdome, or hath made many wife men in the world?

I answer, First, God is said to be only wise, because there is none so wise as he; his wisdome is so much beyond the wisdome of all men, that no man may be called wise but God. Thus also God is called the only Potentate, (I Tim. 6.15.) because though there are many Potentates in the world, yet Gods potency is beyond them all. His life also is such, that, at the 16th verse of the same Chapter it is said, He only hath immortality, yet both the Angels and the souls of men are immortal; but God hath immortality in a way of such eminency, that the very Angels and souls of men are mortal in comparison of him. David said of his life, (Pfal. 39. 5.) My age is nothing to thee; I scarce live at all, when I consider the life of God; so the wisest man in the world may say of his wisdome, my wisdome is nothing unto thee, I have no wisdome when I consider how wise God is.

Secondly, God is faid to be only wife, because there are none originally wife but he; his wisdome is of himself, yea his wisdome is himself; the wisdome of God is not a separable quality from him, as the wisdome of a man is. Many are men, but not wise men; but it is impossible for God to be God, and not to be wise; his wisdome is essential to him. The wisdome of man is like gilding upon an earthen vessel; but the wisdome of God is like a golden vessel. The wisest men are gilded over with wisdome, they are adorned and beautissed with it, but no man, how wise soever is wisdome, only God is. God is (if I may so speak) an immense and immeasurable vessel of gold, he is all gold, you cannot distinguish the gold from the vessel, it is gold quite through, he is massive gold, massive wisdome. The wisdome of man is another thing from himself. The wisdome of God is himself; and thus God alone is wise.

Thirdly, God is only wife, because all wisdome is from him; as he hath his wisdome from himself, so all others have wisdome from him; all the wisdome of men and Angels, is but a ray from him;

his light, but a stream, yea, but a drop from his Ocean. Bezaliel's Artificial wildome was from the Lord, Solomons political wildome was from the Lord; Solomon asked wisdome from the Lord to governe. And not only is the wildome of Princes, Statelinen and Politicians, but the very Plowmans wildome is from the Lord. (Ifa. 28. 26.) where the Prophet having shewed how the Plowman tills the ground, how he harrows and casts in the seed, how he thresheth and gets out the graine, he addeth (v. 29.) This comes from the Lord, who is wonderfull in counsel, and excellent in wirking. The Plowman knoweth not how to till his ground, to fow his feed, to harrow his land, to thresh his corne, if the Lord did not give him wisdome for it. Thus common wisdome as well as policical and spiritual wildome is of God, as Daniel confessed when the secret was revealed to him, (Dan. 2. 21.) He giveth wisdome unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. Seeing then all wisdome is from God, we must confesse, He is only wife.

Fourthly, The Lord may be faid to be only wife, because he is victoriously wise, his wisdome is a conquering wisdome, he conquers by his wisdome as well as by his power; his wisdome overthrows the wise men of the world, (Prov. 21. 30.) There is no wisdome, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord. Many men will be taking and giving counsel against the Lord, but it shall not stand (Isa. 8. 9.) He is only wise, who destroyeth the wisdome of the wise, (I Cor. 1. 19. 1 Cor. 3. 19, 20.) Thus the Lord is mighty in Grength of wisdome, in knowing and disposing wisdome, discerning all things most clearly, and ordering all things most wisely, according to the pleasure of his holy and righteous will: and he is so wise in all these things, that he ought to be acknowledged and reverenced, as the only wise God, or as God

only wife. Hence take these Inferences.

First, If the Lord be mighty in strength of wisdome as well as in strength of power, then fear to do any thing amiss before him; he will spy our every fault; and the more you cover the faults, cracks and slawes in what you do, the more the Lord sets himself to find them out; you cannot hide what you do from him, therefore take heed what you do.

Secondly, Is God mighty in Arength of wisdome? then do not find fault with any thing he doth, for he can do nothing amis.

A a 2

The works of providence, whether they regard persons or Nations, are done with as much exactness as the works of Creation were. In what beauty and order was the fabrick of this world fet up at first in fix dayes! It is called Cosmos in Greek, from the beautiful order visible quite through it; and certainly, the works of providence are as orderly and perfect as the work of Creation, and so will appear at last, though now we see so many appearing consustions, disturbances, and tolkings up and down: The Lord keeps order, how disorderly so ever men are. The Lord doth all things in number, weight and measure. There is not one, the least, flip, error or mistake in what himself doth, nor in what he suffers men to do as to his own ends, how many errors and mistakes soever there are in the wayes of men, or in the means which they use. Then take heed of picking holes in Gods work, much more of picking quarrels with his work. We are apt to find fault (where there is none) with what God doth, but how flow are we to find faults (where there are many) in our own doings!

Thirdly, Is the Lord mighty in strength of wisdome? then never be troubled, though you have mighty wife men against you; be not afraid, only labour to affure the mighty wife God for you. If you can but affure God, who is mighty in wisdome for you, you need not be troubled, though mighty wife men are against you. though Achitophels, though Matchevels, though the Conclave of Babylon be against you: if the wisdome of God be with us and for us, we are well enough, and shall do well enough, notwithstand-

ing the wisdome of the world against us.

Fourthly, If God be mighty in strength of wisdome, then, when we want wisdome, and know not what to do, or how to suffer, let us go to God; if we want wisdome to mannage a prosperous estate, or to bear an afficted estate, let us go to God. The Apostle gives this direction (James 1. 9.) If any man lack wifdome, (he speaks of a man in a troublous condition, in a time of temptation) let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not. God hath wildome enough for us, and can make us wife enough; apply to him, and you may be supplyed for all occasions.

Fifthly, If God be mighty in strength of wisdome, then confidently cast your care on him, put your all into his hand, (Pfal. 37. M.) Commit thy way to the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring

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it to passe. (Prov. 16. 3.) Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established; that is, thy thoughts about thy works, and usually our thoughts are more unsetled than our works. When we have left a matter in the hand of a wife man, how confident are we, and how composed are our thoughts, as to the wellissuing of it! how much more may we be consident, and compofed, when we have believingly left our matters in the hand of the

only Wife God!

Sixthly, If the Lord be so mighty in Wisdome, that he only is Wife, then beware of trusting to your own wisdom, or of being wife in your own eyes. That's the counsel of Solomon the wife, (Prov. 3.5.) Lean not to thy own understanding. We are apt to lean too much to the understanding of others; if we have such a wife man to counsel us, we think all's safe, we are Cock-sure (as we fay) the work cannot miscarry. Tis dangerous to lean to the understanding of others, but much more to lean to our own. Remember God is only Wise, and we never shew our selves more fools, than when we lean to our own wisdome, or think to carry it by our own wit, and so depart from the wisdome of God. Therefore be fools, be nothing in your own wildom, and you shall be wife with the wisdome of God.

Thus I have profecuted the Text according to our Transfati-

There is yet another reading as to both the parts of this 5th verse, which I shall touch a little, because they are much insisted

upon by Learned Interpreters.

The former part of this verse, which we render Behald God is Ease Deus pemighty, and despiseth not any, is thus rendred, Behold God is might fastide potenty, and despiseth not the mighty. The vulgar Latine, thus, God doth tes, robore cornot cast away the mighty, seeing be himself also is mighty. The dis. Scult. scope of this Translation, is thus conceived. Job in the 29th Daw potentes Chapter of this Book, having fet forth his own mightinesse or non abject, cum greatness, complained in the 30th, that notwithstanding all his for- tens. Vulg mer power and might, yet God had cast him do vn, and laid him Othac expliin the dust. Here Elihu tells him, though God be mighty, yet catio verba he doth not despise the mighty; he doth not reject any man how Hebrais conhigh soever, because he is high, nor the great, how great soever, quod saye fit, because grear. God himself is great and mighty, and they that are redundante like, (usually) rejoyce in those that are like them. Therefore God verii pope . being

Ecce Deus potentem non fassidit, vel, Ecce Deus potens non fassidit se potentem. Gum enim verbo illo accusativus addendus su, satius est em repetere, quam objestum com mene fingers. Scult.

Non potentia justa sed actio prava damnatur. Greg. l. 26. c. 24.

Becce Deus being mighty himself, dorn not despise or reject those that are mighty, because they are so; there must be some other reason (it is not their might inesse) why God despises and casts down the us potens non mighty. God is mighty, and despiset not the mighty.

Hence Note.
The great God is no enemy to great resse.

God doth not despise the mighty, the Kings and Princes of the Earth, as they are such; he hath no antipathy in him against greatnesse, nor doth he reject any man because he is great; if he doth at any time reject a great man, it is because of the abuse of his greatnesse: God dislikes no mans just power, but the unjust exercise of that power. The Authority and Power of man over man is of God, therefore God doth not despise men because they are in power. He ordaineth Powers, There is no Power but of God, the Powers that be, are ordained (or as our Mugin hath it, ordered) of God. He puts power into the hands of men, and disposeth of their power. God cannot despise his own Ordination.' Tis the abuse of Power, and not the Power it felf, which the Lord fers himfelf against, and that indeed he doth set himself against; he despiseth the most mighty and powerful Princes of the World, when they instead of governing, are only vexing others with their Power: This causeth him to poure contempt upon Princes (Pial. 107. 40.) and renders him terrible to the Kings of the Earth (Pfal. 76. 12.) Yet the Lord is never so angry with, nor doth he so aggravate the faults of those that are in Power, as to make Power it self faulty. Indeed, when great and mighty men turn their Power into oppression, then the Lord speaks as if he had conceived a displeafure against all great and mighty men, yet he is not displeased with their greatnesse, but with the mis-improvement of their greatnesse, and mal-administration of their Power. The Prophet puts the Question (Hab. 3. 8.) Was the Lord displeased against the Rivers? was thine anger against the Rivers? was thy wrath against the Sea? What was the reason why God turned the River of Nilm in Egypt, into blood? What was the reason why God divided the Red Sea? Was he wrath with the River, or with the Sea? No, he was wrath with the great Ones of Egypt, his wrath was against Tharoah and the Egyptians. Such an expression we have (Nahum 1. 4.) He rebuketh the Sea, and maketh it dry,

and dryeth up all the Rivers: Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the Flower of Lebanon languisheth. What was the meaning of all this? it only fignified that the Lord was highly displeased with the great and mighty Ones of the world, who were to others, as the Sea is to a River, and as Carmel and Lebanon were to the Plains and low Valleys of the Earth, exceeding them in height and greatnesse; I say, he was highly displeased with them, because thele carried it amiss in the exercise of their high Power; it was not because they were high and great, but because they had not exalted God in their highnesse, nor acted towards man as became those who were advanced above, and over other men. Thus all along the Lord speaks against, and rebukes the high and mighty, upon no other account but the unrighteous administration of their might & highness. God quarrels with no man meerly for his might.

The Hiltoryes of all Ages have reported the great and mighty men of the World, opposing the mighty, purely because they were so. Some say they did it out of Reason of State, but the true Reason of ir, usually was their own pride, or envy, because Superbia pathey could not bear those that were equal with them, as Pompey, much lesse a Superiour, as Casar could not. Or it was out of fear that the great would undermine their greatnesse, or bring them down. Thus mighty men oppose the mighty, as mighty; but the Lord is infinitely above these thoughts, He is mighty, and he de-Spifeth not the mighty, nor doth he set himself against them, be- magnificentias cause they are mighty. The liberal (Isa. 32. 8.) deviseth liberal cogitabit. Heb. things, and by liberal things shall be stand. David a great Pince, prayed (Pfal. 51.12.) that God would establish him by his free (or Princely) Spirit; that being a mighty King, he might never any more entertain low and unworthy thoughts of any man, nor do Maginus virany thing unworthy of God, or of himself.

Again, Our Translation distributes the latter part of the verse Coc. into two Branches of the mightinesse of God. He is mighty, first, in strength; and secondly, In wisdome. This, by others, is rendred bore cordinic. a fingle Proposition. He is mighty in strength of heart. Strength valet animi of heart may be taken three wayes: First, For courage in dan- prassantia, gers. Secondly, For patience in troubles. Thirdly, For noble- est magni aninesse and greatnesse of mind, in all we do. In this third or last mi erge opera sense, we are to understand it here; as if Elihu had said, The rum non con-Reason why the Lord being mighty, doth not despife the mighty, is temnit. Mesc.

tute cords. כבירכחל

this

this, Because he excels all others, not only in mightixess and power, but in the nobleness of his Spirit. The Lord hath such an heroical Spirit, that he can do nothing below or unbecoming himfelf. This is an excellent reading of the words. Take two Notes from it. First, By way of Assercion. Secondly, By way of Illation, By way of Affertion, thus,

The Lord hath a wonderful noble heart, and magnificent,

He hath not only an outward power (as many have) but an inward power; he is not only Master of others, but, as I may lay, he is Master of himself. Many are Masters of others, who are not at all Masters of themselves; they are mighty in the strength of hand, yet weak as to strength of heart. The inward excellency and mightinesse of the heart of God, may be seen eminently in

a threefold respect.

First, The Lord is mighty of heart, as to patience and longsufferance, in bearing with those that are evil. The Lord is infinitely above that patience which confifts in the bearing of evil, (though that as was toucht before, shews much strength of heart) but he is continually in the exercise of that patience, which confifts in bearing with those that are evil. And O how great is the Arength and might of Gods heart in this! Some of the Rabbies translate the Original Text, long-suffering. The Prophet Nahum speaks of God, as slow to anger, and great in power, (Chap. 1.3.) It argueth strength of heart indeed, when we can stop and bridle our boisterous and angry passions, towards those that have offended us. The Lord faith unto, or concerning Pharoah (Exod. 9. 16.) And in very deed, for this cause bave I raised thee up, for to them in thee my power, &c. What power? The Lord shewed forth a twofold power in the raising up of Pharoah: First, the power of his Arm, that he was able to cast down such a mighty Prince. Secondly, The power of his Patience, that he spared him from ruin till he had sent ten messages to him, and poured ten Plagues upon him. The Lord was so provoked by Pharoah, that he might have crushed him upon the first denyal, but he forbare him long; the Lord might well fay, I have fet thee up that I might them forth my power, my power in forbearing thee long, as well as in destroying thee at last. The Apostle speaks of this power (Rom. 9. 22.) What if

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God willing to shew his wrath, and make his power known (the Lordwill not only shew his wrath hereafter in breaking those vessels of destruction, but he shews his power now in suffering them long, and therefore he to make his power known) endured with much long-suffering the Vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. Here's the strength of the Lords heart, he bears long with wicked men.

Secondly, There is a mighty power or strength of heart in God, as in long-suffering towards impenitent finners, so in pardoning finners who repent. Who, but the Lord hath fuch a firength Magnifestine of Spirit, to pardon and passe by offences! After the People of est ignoscene: Israel had mutined, and mutmured, and so provoked the Lord to Solo sublimie the height, Moses begs and bespeaks the power of the Lords et excelso viri pardoning-mercy, (Numb. 14. 17.) And now I befeech thee let the eft, nee the power of my Lord be great, according as thou half spoken, saying, num, nif quod The Lord is long-suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity, final placi-&cc. As if Moses had said, Lord, thou must out forth as much dum. Sen. power in pardoning the fins of this People, as ever thou didst in deliwering them from their bendage-fufferings in Egypt. Or thus, O Lord, then might of magnifie the power of thine anger in punishing

this rebellious People, but rather magnific the power of thy patience and long-sufferance in sparing and pardoning them. O what strength of heart is in God, who palleth by the great transgressions of his

People!

Thirdly, The Lord hath a mightinesse of heart in executing his wrath upon his incorrigible enemies, (Pfal. 90. 11.) Who knoweth the power of thine anger 2. The anger of God is fuch' a thing as no man can go to the bottome of it in his thoughts. The Lords wrath is powerful, beyond all imagination and apprehenfion; his anger, as well as his love, peffeth knowledge. In all thefe selpects the Lord hath strength of heart, or he is mighty in strength of heart, as well as in hand or arm. The greatest discoveries of Gods power, are in the wayes of his mercy. His Judgements are called his strange work, but his mercy is his strength, as the Prophet calls it, (Ifa. 27.5.) where warning the Bryare and Thorns to take heed of warring with God, he gives a finner this counsel, Let him take held of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me. But what is meant Apprehender by the strength of God? Some render, Let him take held of my arcon mean, Tower. A Tower is a place of firength, but here put for that i.e. Christuse.

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which Go I glories in most, as his chiefest strength, even his goodnesse, mercy, patience, and long-sufferance, yea Christ himself; as if he had faid, Let not the sinner struggle with my strength, let him not think by strong hand to overcome my strength, but let him take hold of my (brift, through whom all those glorious perfections of mine, my Goodne ffe, Mercy, Patience, &c. are given out to the children of men, and he shall make peace with me. true strength of God; nor doth any thing more set forth the Brength of man, than this, that he is ready to pardon, to forgive, and passe by; only impotent spirits are much for revenge. 'Tis our weaknesse not to passe by wrongs and injuries done to us. To bear wrongs is to be like the high and mighty God, to bear them in mind, is to be like the lowest and weakest spirited men. He is Arong indeed, who is Arong in patience against Offenders, and as strong in mercy to pardon humble ones, as in power to punish. stubborn and rebellious ones;

Secondly, By way of Mlation,

Note.
*Tis the greatness of Gods Spirit, or the strength of his heart and mind, which moderates him towards suful man.

That which keeps men in a moderate frame towards men, is true greatnesse of spirit . They that are of such a spirit, will neither despise those that are below them, nor envy those that are ahove them, nor willingly oppose those that are equal to them. The envy and opposition of others greatnesse, ariseth from the meannesse and weaknesse of our own spirits. The reason, why one man is affraid that another should be high, is because himself hath not a real highnesse of spirit; or the reason why most oppose the greatnesse of others, is the littlenesse of their own spilits. Whence spring contentions and strifes, envyings ar, and underminings of one another? come they not from the narrownesse of our hearts, that we cannot rejoyce in the good of others, or from the impotent jealousies of our hearts, that we fear others will do us hurt ? If such a one ger up, he will pull me down; if such a one be high, tis dangerous to me, therefore I must pull him down, if I can; whence comes this, but from lownesse and poornesse of spirit, from that pitiful thing in man, called Pufillanimity. The Lord hath fo great a Spirit, that as he envieth no mans greatneffe, so he feareth no mans greatness, and therefore doth that which is just and equal to all forts of men, bad and good, as is further thewed in the next verse.

Vers. 6. He preserveth not the life of the micked, but giveth right to the poor.

Asif Elihu had faid, Though the Lord doth not despise any that are great, yet he doth not respect any that are bad; he preservesh not the life of the wicked. And as the Lord will not do any wrong to therich, so, to be fure, he will give right to the poor. What Eliha had affirmed of God, he now proveth by instances or particulars, and that both in respect of the wicked and the godly. That the Lord is most just and righteous he proveth thus,

He preserveth not the life of the wicked.

That's the first instance, and he expresses it negatively, He intro 87 preserveth not the life of the wicked, he maketh not, or suffereth not Non visibists the micked to live. The Hebrew Arickly is, He doth not enlive the wicked: So the word is used concerning the Midwives that feared God, (Exod. 1. 17.) They did not obey the word of the King, but saved the Male Children alive, or, they enlivened the Male children. They who preserve, do, upon the matter, give a new life. The like Expression we have (Exod. 18. 22.) Thou shalt not suffer a Witch tolive: The Hebrew is, thou shalt not vivine or enliven a Witch. They who have commerce with the Devil, the Prince of the Air, they who Trade with Hell, to satisfie the lusts and curiofities of evill men on earth, are not worthy to breath in the Air, or live upon the face of the Earth. He preserveth not the life of the wicked. There are two things in this negative speech of Elihu.

First, God doth not shew any favour to, nor indulge wicked men in their evil wayes. He that will not fo much as preferve their lives, doth not give them favour while they live. Life and favour are two distinct things, (Job 10.12.) Thou hast granted me life and favour. Favour with life is the priviledge of the living; favour is better than life. The Lord doth bur feldome reprieve, much less dorn he at any time favour or pardon impenitently wicked men.

Secondly, When Elihusaith, he preserveth not the life of the wicked,

Astérns, pro interfait, et omni vita spolist. Coc.

Non vivifices wicked, we are to understand it by an ordinary Figure, wherein less is expressed, than is to be understood; He preserveth not, that is, first, he is not solicitous about their preservation, he cares not much what becomes of them; and not only fo, but Secondly, he destroyeth the life of the wicked; the Lord will certainly ruine and utterly under them, one time or other, one way or other; he will do it either immediately, by his own Arme, by some notable Aroke of vengeance from himself: or he will do it by means, he will find out, and impower instruments, that shall destroy the very life of the wicked. And I conceive Elika brings in this Proposition concerning God, in answer to what Fob had observed and complainingly alleadged about the Prosperity of the wicked, (Chap. 21.7.) Wherefore doth the misked live, become old, year are mighty in power? As if Job had intimated, that the Lord surely did shew, not only some, but much respect noto wicked men; they did not only live, but they lived a long time, and not only a long time a bare life, but were mighty in power, and over-powered, yea, oppressed many with their might. Libs replyeth here, notwithstanding this Allegation (which seemed to reflect upon the Justice of God) that the Lord preserveth not the Life of the wicked. Mark, first, he deth not say, he preserveth not the Life of a man that functh, for then whose life should be preserved? but, he preferveth not the life of the micked; that is, of a man who finmeth prefumptuously, and goeth on impenitently, who is incorrigible. Secondly, he doth not fay, God suffereth not a wicked man to live, for then (most men being wicked in all Ages of the world) the world would be very thin, and almost naked, of Inhabitants : But be preservet wes (faith he) the life of the wicked; that is, he fets no Rore by them, as we do of those things, which we carefully preserve. We may compare this verse with that of Fob (Chap. 34. 26, 27, 28.) where 'tis faid of mighty oppresfors, the Lord friketh them as wisked men (that is, as he useth to Arike wicked men) on the open fight of others; because they carned back from him, and would not consider any of his wayes: So that aboy sanfethe ery of the poor to come up to him, and he heareth the ery of the affiliated. Now, as there Elian speaks affirmatively, he Origeth wicked men, so here he speaks negatively (which is the same in effect) God doth not preserve the life of the wicked; and as there he faid, God beareth the cry of the afflitted, or poor, so here,

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be giveth right to the poor. These Texts are of the same sence, and expound each other. From the former part of this fixth verse already opened, he preferveth not she life of the wicked,

Observe, First; pricked men are out of Gode Protection, they can expelt no favour from bies;

They are out-lawed. Some persons are out-lawed by men, and then if any man injure them, or kill them, they can have no remedy by the Law; they have their amends (as we fay) in their own hands, the Law gives them none. Wicked men are out of Gods love, and therefore out of his care; he turns them up (48 we say) to the wide World to shift for themselves : whether they link or lwim, tis all one to him. He is neither Sun nor Shield to the wicked, he is both to the godly, (Pfal. 84. 11.) The Lord is a Sun and a Shield, the Lord will give Grace and Glory; no good thing will be with-hold from them that walk aprightly. Asa Sun he giveth out the warm Beams of his favour, to refreda and revive them, when the World leaves them cold and comfortless: And as a Shield he defends and saves them, when the World firikes at them and vexes them; he will keep them fafe from evil, as with a Shield. The wicked have no share in this, nor in any such-like promise; the Lord is rather Fire and Sword, than Sun or Shield to them; he neither comforts them while they live, nor preserves their lives from death.

But some may say, Doth not God preserve the lives of the wicked? Is it not faid (700 7. 20.) He is the preferver of men? Which indefinite feems to carry it for all men: And (Pfal. 36. 6.) Thou prefervest man and beast. Yes, wicked men not only live, but prosper and flourish in the World, as Job complained, (Chap. 21. 7.) Wherefore do the micked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? Surely then they are preserved, and if God de not preferve them, who doth? Man hath no more power to preserve his own life, than to give himself life; how is it then that the Text faith, God doth not preferve them? or that they are

out of Gods Protection?

I answer, First, It cannot be denyed, but that the wicked hold their lives, and all the good things they have (possibly they have many good things) of God, But the wicked, and their lives,

or the lives of the wicked, are preserved only by that common Providence of God, which extends even to the Beafts of the field; they are not preferved by any special Providence or Promise of preservation made to them; their Souls are not bound in the bundle of life with the Lord their God, as Abigail affured David his should be (1 Sam. 25. 29.) not are they, as one very well expresseth it in the Language of the Prophet Isainh (Chap. 4.3.) written (or reckoned) among the living in Jerusalem. Neither their life, nor their death, is precious in the Lords fight, as both of the meanest Saints are (Pfal. 116. 15.) The special Promises of preservation are made to the godly; the common Providences of preservation extend to the wicked. God preserves many wicked men, but not one of them can plead a Promise for his preservation, or say, Lord, thou hast undertaken to preserve me, I have thy Word or Warrant for my preservation. So then, the Lord doth not preserve the life of any wicked man upon a word of Promise.

Secondly, I answer, When the lives of the wicked are preserved, they are not preserved for any love which God bears to their persons as such, but either, First, to bring them into a better state, that is, to turn them from their wickedness, that being converted, they may be saved at last, according to his purpose: Or, Secondly, they are preferved, to serve some ends and purposes of his in this World. For though God hath no pleasure in them, yet he makes some use of them, and doth his pleasure by them; Or, I may say, they are preserved to be Executioners of his displeasure, in chastening and correcting his own people. The King of Affria was preserved in great Power; and to what end ? I will fend him against an hypocritical Nation, (Isa. 10. 6.) He must go on my Errand, though he meaneth not fo, nor doth his heart think fo, (as the Lord spake, vers. 7.) He hath other matters and designs in his head, but I have this use of him, and of his power, even to punish the people of my wrath. The Lord made use also of Nebuchadnezar, and his Army, to serve him in the destroying of Tyrus and of him and his Army he faith, They wrought for me, (Ezek. 29. 20.) Thus the Lord doth some of his work, his strange work especially, his work of Judgment, by the hands of wicked men; and therefore he preserves their lives. Yea, he preserves them many a time to be a help and a defence to his people. A Thorn Hedge keeps the Passure, that strange Cattle break not in, and eat it up. Wicked men are as Bryars and Thorns, and they are suffered to live, because the Lord can make use of them as a Fence to his people. When the Serpent cast out of his month water as a Flood after the woman (the Church) that he might cause her to becarried away of the Flood, then the Earth (that is, earthly, carnal men) helped the Woman (Rev. 12. 15, 16,) The Lord used bad men to do that good work, the preservation of his distressed and persecuted Church.

Thirdly, As the Lord suffers many wicked men to live, that they may be brought out of their fins, so he suffers others to live that they may fill up the measure of their fins. Why did the Lord preserve the Amerites? was it because he loved or liked them? no, but because they were not then ripe for Judgment, (Gen. 15. 16.) The Iniquity of the Amerites is not yet full. Some wicked men are to fill up their dayes, that they may fill up the measure of their Fathers sins, by their own, as Christ threatned the Scribes and Pharises, (Math. 23.32.) Such a grant of life, though for a thousand years, is worse than a thousand Deaths.

Fourthly, we may answer, The wicked are not so much preserved from, as reserved unto further wrath, (2 Pet. 2. 9.) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of Judgment, to be punished. God doth not presently punish all the wicked, nor take away their lives; there is a day of Judgment coming, and till that day come,

their lives are preferved, as persons reserved unto Juegment.

Fisthly, VVhen wicked men are said to be out of the Lords Protection, consider, There is a twofold Protection; First, ordinary; Secondly, extraordinary. The Lord doth preserve and protect wicked men in an ordinary, not in an extraordinary way; he doth not work wonders, much less miracles, to preserve them, as he often doth for the preservation of his own people. God will not be at such cost in preserving of wicked men, as he is at in the preserving the sives and liberties of his eminent Servants; rather than they shall perish, or not be preserved, he will somtimes work a miracle, and put Nature out of its course, to save their lives. VVhen those three VVorthies were oast into the midst of the burning siery Furnace, God stopt the rage of that surious Element, that the Fire had no power upon their bodyes, nor

nor the finel of fire had passed on them, (Dan. 3. 27.) Did we ever hear that the Lord restrained the power of the fire, to preserve wicked men? When Daniel, a man precious in the sight of God, was cast into the Lions Den, the Lord preserved his life also, by stopping the Mouths of the Lyons, (Dan. 6.22.) Did we ever hear that God preserved the lives of wicked men in such a way? No sooner were Daniels accusers cast into the Lyons Den, but the Lyons had the Mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces, e're ever they came to the bottome of the Den, (v.24.) The Lord doth not preserve the lives of the wicked, by miracu-

lous manifestations of his Power and Clory.

Sixthly, I answer, Though some wicked men are commonly preserved, asother men, yet many by their wickedness, hasten their ruine, and shorten the number of their dayes. We may distinguish of wicked men; First, wicked men may be taken in a General notion, for all that are unconverted, and unregenerate. Many persons pass for honest and good men in the world, who yet are wicked, being carnal, and abiding in a state of nature : wicked men of this fort, are ordinarily preferved. Secondly, Take wicked men (and fuch I conceive the Text especially intends) for notorious wieked men, such as are murderers, blasphemers, &c. the Lord doth not preserve the lives of such, but lets mans Justice feize upon them, or divine vengeance overtake them (P/al. 55. 23.) The blood thirfy and descitful man fhall not live one half his dayee; that is, he shall not live half so long as he might, according to the course of Nature, because of his nefarious anful courses. Histories are full of dreadful Tragedies, fealing to this Truth, with the blood and untimely death of gross offenders. How often have we feen or heard of the Vengeance of God following and falling upon those that were (fignanter) notoriously wicked; and of these we are especially to understand the Poynt and Text, He preserveth not the life of the wicked. Take this Inference from all that hath been faid about this awakening Observation;

How sad is the life of a wished man! indeed of any man on this side the Line of grace, but especially of any very wicked man! He can scarce be said to live, whose life is not preserved by God; a wicked man is alwayes in death, seeing God doth not preserve his life. The Apostle Paul said he was in Deaths of sen,

but God had as often preserved his life; but they are in Deaths alwayes, whose life God never preserveth. VVhar preservation of life can he have, who hath not God for his preserver? God in Creation or Propagation giveth us our life as to being; but Prefervation gives us our life as to well being. Can it be well with them that are not under the preservation of God? To be redeemed by Christ would be but a small comfort, unless we were also preserved by him. (fude 1.) To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. It we were only redeemed from death, and not preserved in life, what were our spiritual life to us? So I may say in respect of the life of the body; to be meerly created or propagated, what is it, if we are not preserved? Tis a high Priviledge, when a man car, not only say, he hath received life from God, but his life is preserved by God. That's the first poynt. He preserveth not the Life of the wicked.

Again, From that other Interpretation of the words, as not to preserve is as much as to destroy and ruine,

Note, As God utterly disowneth, so he will at last utterly ruine all nicked men.

He not only doth not favour them, but pours out fury upon them, (Jer. 10. 25.) Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the Families that call not on thy Name. The Prophelie of Isaiah speaks no better concerning them than that prayer of Feremy. (Ifa. 3. 11.) Wo unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hand shall be given him. And what can the hand of a wicked man earn? the wages of fin is death; he can get nothing but wrath, and death, nothing but tribulation and anguish here, and eternal misery hereaster, by the work of his hands. VVoe to the wicked, for the reward of his hands thall be given him, that is, eternal destruction and forrow shall be given him, according to the iniquity of his hand. A godly man is rewarded according to the cleanness of his hand; (Pfal. 18. 20, 24.) He labours to keep his hands, (much more his heart clean, whatever the VVorld judge of him) But woe to the wicked when God giveth them the reward of their hands, of their unclean, foul and filthy hands; for what can fuch hands get or procure by all their 194 Chap. 36. An Exposition upon the Book of Jo B. Vers. 6.

labour but their own mischief and sorrow? There is no peace, saith my God, to the micked, (Ma. 57. 21.) No peace is to them, because no good is done by them: their portion lyes in promises, who keep Commandements, so theirs must needs lye in threatnings, who do nothing but break them, or break them in all they do. My meditation of him shall be sweet, I mill be glad in the Lord, (said David, Pial. 104. 34.) As if he had said, I know that I and every Godly man, shall receive so much good from the Lord, that it doth me good at the heart to think of it: But as for the wicked, I can fore-see (as we say) with half an eye, how ill it will be with them, and so let it be; I must subscribe to, and vote with the righteous judgement of the Lord against them (ver. 35.) Let the sinners be consumed out of the Earth, and let the micked be

Lastly, Consider these words, He preserveth not the life of the wicked, with respect to the wicked, specially intended and treated of in this Context, The Lord is mighty, and despiseth not the mighty (because they are mighty) he preserveth not the wicked.

Hence Note;
Wicked men, how mighty soever, cannot preserve themselves, nor doth the Lord undertake for their preservation.

The strongest of wicked men, cannot stand by their own strength, they cannot protect nor preserve themselves, and the Lord will not put forth his strength to preserve them from falling. As no mightiness, no power can bear man up, or maintain him against the Lord, so not without the Lord; if he preserveth not the life of the wicked, they cannot escape death and destruction, though high as Cedars, and strong as Oakes. They cannot but perish, whom God preserveth not. He preserveth not the life of the micked,

But giveth right to the poors

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Or to the afflicted. Poverty it self is a great affliction, and usually the poor are afflicted by others. Here is a second instance of Gods goodnesse in the exercise of his power and might. As He preserveth not the life of the micked, So he giveth right to the poor; as he destroyeth wrong-doers, so he will do right to those that suffer wrong. Every word is considerable, First, He giveth; that's

that's an act of bounty. Secondly, He giveth right; that's an act of equity. And that Thirdly, To the poor; that's an act of pity

and charity.

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Further, When its faid, He giveth, that implyes, First, a prefent or speedy act; Secondly, a constant and seried course of acting. As the word giveth imports, that the Lord do hit now, and doth not put it off to hereaster only; so it likewise importeth that the Lord will do it hereaster, as well as now. He giveth

Right to the poor.

The poor suffer wrong, but the Lord comes, and gives them right, or rights them, and that in a twofold notion. First, He gives them that right which is due to them, according to his own righteous Laws, or the righteous Laws of men. That's right done, which is done according to a righteous Law. Secondly, He giveth them that right which is due to them according to the integrity of their own hearts and wayes. We may say, Thirdly, The Lord giveth them right, not according to the Arichnesse of the Law, but according to the integrity of their hearts. Thus David prayed (Pfal. 7.3.) Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousnesse, and according to mine integrity that is in me; that is, according to my honest meaning, and the simplicity of my Sout. As if he had said, O Lord, do me right; men have done me wrong, they have false and wrong apprehensions of me, they raise false reports concerning me, but thou, O Lord, who knowest my integrity will judge me accordingly, and tis my humble and earnest Prayer that thou wouldest. He giveth right

To the poor.

The poor in Scripture are taken two wayes; First, as they stand in opposition to the rich; Secondly, as they are opposed to the proud; thus here, he giveth right to the poor, as well as to the rich; and he will especially give right to the humble poor, to the righteous poor, to the poor in spirit. Such the Prophet speaks of (Isa. 66.2.) To this man will I look, even to him that is poor. He means not the poor in purse (as such) he means not those (as such) who wear poor cloaths, the Lord doth not always look to, or respect such poor, for many such are both proud and wicked; but he looks to him that is poor in spirit, or of a contrict spirit;

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rit; let such be in Rags, and lye upon the Dunghil, the Lord will look to them; and he hath a threefold look for them. First, A look of honour, as respecting their Persons. Secondly, A look of ca'e, to supply their wants. Thirdly, A look of justice, to deliver them from wrong. And if they that are poor in spirit, be rich also in the world, they shall not fail to receive right from the hand of the Lord. The Lord giveth right to all sorts of men against their wicked oppressors; but his poor, the Godly poor, believing poor, those that are poor not only in purse, but in spirit, are more peculiarly under this priviledge, of being righted by the Lord. And usually in Scripture, the word poor is taken in a good sence, for good men, as the word rich, in an ill sence, for evil men (Jam. 5. 1.) Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you. The Apostle speaks as if that were the case of all rich, or as if he called all rich men to weeping and howling, &c. Yet some poor men are wicked, and some rich men are righteous; and therefore I conceive the word poor may be taken here for any wronged or oppressed poor, set especially for the Godly poor. For though God giveth right to all men, even the worst of men, yet here the scope of Elibu is to thew that God takes most care of those whom the wicked do most, not only neglect, but injure and oppresse, He giveth right to the

Nomen pauperis in bonum funitur, pauperes sum populim Dei.

Hence Note;

The poor, especially the Godly poor, are often wronged, and go by the worst in the world. O: thus:

The poor, as poor, usually suffer from, and by the world.

As the world is apt to oppresse any poor, so mostly the Godly poor, (Pfal. 12.5.) For the sppression of the poor I will arise. 'Tis possible a rich man may be oppressed, a mighty man may be oppressed by one mightier than he; but usually the poor are oppressed, and they trampled on, who are already undersoot. And therefore the Lord such, For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, and set him at safety from him that puffeth at him. This is not exclusive, the Lord will arise for the help of the rich and great, when any such are wronged; but he is said to arise for the help of the poor, as intimating that the poor seldome come by their right, or find help in the world, unlessed.

God arise to help them, or help them to it; and because he hath said he will help them to their right, we may be sure he will. Davids Faith was strong upon this promise, (Pfal. 18. 27.) Thom wils save the afflicted people. (Psal. 72. 4.) He shall judge the prov of the People. (Pial. 140.12.) I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted. And his Experience was as clear, as his Faith was strong (Pfal. 37. 25.) I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not feen the righteons for faken; that is, I have often, yea alwayes feen him helped one way or other; and sometimes set on high from affliction, (Plal. 107. 41.) The Lord careth so for the poor, asif he cared for none else; and the best of the poor are little cared for by any, but the Lord. (Zeph. 3. 12.) I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the Name of the Lord. The rich of this world trult to creature helps, but as the Lords poor know they ought not to trust in creature help, so they have it not to trust to, and therefore they trust in the Name of the Lord, not only out of choice (which is their grace and duty) but out of necessity. And what will the Lord do for them that trust in him, not only our of necessity but choice? he will surely take care of them, and do them right.

Secondly, Note; God rights the poor freely.

He giveth them right, he doth not fell it. What freer than gift? They need not bribe for it. As he freely giveth them the Righteousnesse of his Son to justifie them, so they have common right of free gift to relieve them.

Note Thirdly; The Lord relieves, or rights the poor speedily.

He giveth, implyeth a present act, and that doubles the mercy.

Note Fourthly; God will always right the wronged poor.

He giveth, imports even a continued act; as he did it in former times, in the dayes of old, so he doth it at this day, and will do it always. As the Lord giveth right speedily, so constantly, with him is no variable nesse or shadow of turning. Most men do right right only by fits, but the Lord is ever giving right.

Lastly, He givethright to the poor, not to this, or that poor mar, but to the poor.

Hence Note ;

The Lord distributes right to all that are wronged.

As his Mercy, so his Justice is not confined to a few, but floweth out to all.

But it may be objected, Why then are so many poor without their right? If the Lord giveth right, and giveth it continually, and impartially, why do the poor cry, and sigh, and groan, and mourn? why see me so many tears of the poor? If they have right, why do they complain?

I answer,

First, The Lord giveth right to the poor, sometimes, when the poor perceive it not. (Pfal. 97. 2.) Clouds and darknesse are round about him, Righteonskesse and Judgement are the habitation of his Throne. When a man cannot see the Lord doing right, yet the Lord doth right. The Sun shineth when eclipsed or covered with a Cloud. The Lord never ceaseth to right the poor, though neither poor nor rich perceive how, or which way he doth it.

Secondly, I answer, He giveth right to the poor, even when they want right, or when they are under the forest oppressions, by supporting their hearts in this perswasion, that he will give them right. The poor have right when their minds are fatisfied that they shall have right. There is no true Godly poor man in the world, how much soever afflicted, but his heart is, or may be satisfied, that he shall have right. That's a sure word (Pfal. 9. 18.) The needy shall not always be forgotten, the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever. And therefore we may pray with confidence, Forget not, O Lord, the Congregation of thy poer for ever, (Pial. 74. 19.) The poor may rest in this assurance, while their croubles rest upon them, that God will bring forth their Righteousnesse as the Light, and their Judgement as the Noon day, (Pfal. 37. 6.) He hath right, who believes he shall have it; as he that believeth, hath everlatting life in hope, long before he attains the possession of it, (John 3.36.)

Thirdly, Though we fay, The Lord giveth right to the poor, both speedily and constantly, yet he reserveth to himself a liber-

ty as to time, and means, and manner; as in all his outward Administrations, so in ministring or giving out this right; the Lord waits to be gracious, till we are ready for his grace, and he waits (in the same sence) to be righteous, till the poor are ready for their right; they shall not stay for it, when once they are ready for it; and it would be a wrong to them to have their right, before they are ready for it.

Lastly, There is a day spoken of, wherein the Lord will do all his poor right in the view of all the world, (Alts 17.31.) He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the World in Righteousnesses, by that wan whom he hath ordained. The day approacheth, wherein the Lord will judge the world in righteousness. Right is prepared & designed for them. The time till right shall be done to all, as is desired, or to the utmost of their desires, maketh hast: He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry; Behold (saith he) I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his works shall be, (Rev. 22.12.) And if the Lord come with a reward in his hand for those who have done well, he will undoubtedly come with right in his hand to give all those who have suffered wrongfully.

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10B. Chap. 36. Verf. 7.

He withdraweth not his eyes from the rightcous: but with Kings are they on the throne, yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.

His verse contains a surther confirmation of Gods righteous A and gracious dealing with the righteous and gracious poor, yea, with all that are righteous and gracious. The words may be raken, either in a stricter or in a larger sense.

First, Strictly, as an Exposition of the latter part of the former verse, He giveth right to the poor, that is, He withdraweth not bis eyes from the righteom: We may put both together, He is fo for to give right to the righteous poor, he takes such care of them, that be cannot take his eye off from them.

Secondly, In a larger and more general fense, as a Conclusion upon the whole matter, that, God will not defert any right cous person, whether poor or rich, high or low, God will take notice of piety and godliness, wheresoever he finds it,

He withdraweth not bis eyes from the righteous.

UU minuit,

The word which we translate withdraweth, and is here used diminuit, ade- negatively, He withdraweth not, fignifies, strictly in the Noune, mir, substrassit. any kind of abatement or diminution, and in the Verb, to diminish, or abate, or take short in any kind that which was before. When Pharaoh (Exod. 5.8.) gave out a fresh Charge for burdening, or indeed oppressing the Children of Israel in their bondage, the Order ran in this stile; The tale of bricks which they did make heretofore you shall lay upon them, you shall not diminish or withdraw any, you shall not abate them a brick. And Moses shewing how facred a thing the Word of God is, (Deut. 9. 2.) gives a double check or prohibition to all medlers with it : First, to medlers by way of addition, Te shall not add unto the Word: Secondly, by way of abatement, or abstraction, Te shall not diminish, or withdraw from it : it is this word; As if the Lord had said, Every tittle of my word shall stand by it self, and every lota be establisht; be sure that ye put nothing to it, that you withdraw

nothing from it. Further, this word which we translate withdraw, is rendred al o to clip, as the hayr of the head or beard is clipt, (Fer. 48. 37.) It is indeed high treason against the King of Heaven, to clip his coyn, his word, which bears the royal Hamp and superscription of his truth and holiness. Thus here, he withdraweth not, that is, the Lord doth not abute, leilen, diminish, or take off his eyes from the righteens, his eyes are fixed on them for good alwayes, and they are alwayes fixed in the fame strength and vertue; He withdraweth not

His eyes.

God is a Spirit without parts and passions, yet often in Scripture parts and passions are ascribed to him in allusion to man, here eyes, He withdrameth not his eyes, that is, his fight, or his O'ules domini providence. And we may take notice, that in Scripture, where this effe Super aliexpression is used without any further addition, it is alwayes ta- quem, nifi aliken in a good sense. When we read either of Gods keeping his semper in baeyes upon his people, or of his not withdrawing his eyes from his num fumitur or people, it alwayes respects their priviledge, benefit and com-peculiaremejus favorem et cufort; He withdraweth not his eyes vant importat.

From the righteous.

He doth not fay, from this or that righteous man, but from the righteous, implying the whole kind or generation of the righteous. The indefinite is universal; we may render it thus; he withdraweth not his eyes from any that are righteous. The righteous here may be taken in a two-fold notion, First, for the righteous, as to their state, or who are in a state of righteousness. Man wanting a righteousness of his own, hath the righteousness of another affigned and imputed to him. Justified persons through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, are righteous persons, as hath been Thewed heretofore. Secondly, We may take righteens here, with respect to the righteousness of their wayes and actions : They who do righteousness are righteous, saith the Apostle John. To a righteous state, there belongs a righteous way, a righteous walk, righteous acting; not that the righteous do not fir, but they would not, nor do they fin at all as the unrighteous. It is a high blemith or staine to the Gospel, when any that pretend to a righteous state, or to righteousness by Jesus Christ, are not righteous as to their Dd wayes wayes and course, as to their walkings and workings, whether towards God or man. 'Fis true, in a strict legal tense, none are righteous, no not one; but in a Gospel sense all justified and sanctified persons are righteous; and they are called so, not only positively as to what themselves are, but comparatively, as to what the men of the world are, who live in a state or walk in a course of sin and unrighteous. The Lord withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous.

But some may here object or question, Is this true only of the righteous? Doth the Lord at any time withdraw his eyes from the unrighteous? truly that would be very good newes to many unrighteous persons, they would be glad that they and their way might be hid from God, or that God would not look upon

them.

I answer, This Scripture is not to be so understood, as if God did behold the righteous and not the wicked, for (Prov. 15.3.) The eyes of the Lord are every where, beholding the evil and the good, whether things done or persons doing them. The Lord doth not withdraw his eyes from the most unrighteous persons, nor from any of their acts or wayes of unrighteousness. And when it is said here, The Lord withdraweth not his eyes from the righteom, it is meant of a peculiar eye, which the Lord hath upon the righteous; he beholds both the righteous and the unrighteous, yet he doth not behold the unrighteous, as he beholds the righteous; which I shall clear further by giving in a five-fold discovery, what that eye of the Lord is which is upon the righteous, foure of which are distinct and totally differing from that eye with which he beholdeth unrighteous men, and from every one of them I thall give you an observation for our further profiting by this general affection, that the Lord withdraweth not his eyes from the righteoms. There is a five-fold eye of God spoken of

First, There is a difcerning eye, that eye by which he unerringly knoweth what every man is, and what every man doth.

Hence note; The Lord taketh exact and full notice of, he clearly discerns the righteens in every condition.

This is true also of the unrighteous; therefore David puts it univer-

universally, (Pfal. 11.4.) His eyes behold, his eye-lids try the children of men, that is, his fight discovers and discerns what they are, of what fort foever they are. We may fee many men, yet not discover what they are, they may have a faire outside to our view, whilest within they are foule and full of rottenness; they may appear in Sheeps cloathing, yet inwardly be ravening Wolves. But the Lords eye is a trying eye, he doth not only know who men are, but he knows what they are. Such is the importance of that Scripture, (Heb. 4. 13.) All things are naked and manifest to his eyes, with whom we have to do; that is, the Lord doth so behold things and persons, that he hath a clear understanding of them. And though the Lords eye be thus upon all men, yet this is frecially affirmed of righteous men, (Pfal. 33. 18.) Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, and hope in his mercy. Again, (Pfal. 34. 15.) His eye is over the righteons. Both texts teach us, that God considers not only what they do, but as I may fay, how they do, whether it be peace with them, or whether it be trouble with them, whether it be joy with them, or whether it be forrow with them, the Lords eye is over them, to discern, not only whether, and how they go, but how things go with them.

Secondly, The Lord hath a directing or a counselling eye.

Hence Note; The Lord with his eye favourably guides, directs, and counsels righteous men.

This eye of the Lord, as it denotes favour, is peculiar to the righteous. We have that expressly, (Pfal. 32.8.) I will instruct thee, and teach thee, (how?) I will guide thee with mine eye. We put in the Margen, I will counsel thee, that is, thee a Godly man, a David, spoken of (v.6,7.) mine eye shall give thee counsel. Men can give direction by the eye, and they that are acquainted with them, understand what they mean when they look this way or that way, thus or so. Solomon saith, A naughty person minketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his singers, (Pro. 6. 12, 13.) that is, all the postures and gestures of his body, shew what he is, stark naught, and silently teach others to be naught. The holy God also teacheth by his feet and singers, his goings and doings, his workes and wayes teach us the work which we should do, and the way wherein we should go; he hash a providen-

vidential eye; the looks of providence give counsel to those who know how to look upon them, and interpret them. The Lord hath a providential eye upon the righteous, not only to foresee their dangers, but to direct their course; he sheweth them their way, and their work by this eye; he tells them what pleafeth him, and what displeaseth hin, by this eye; this eye the Lord doth not withdraw from the righteous; He will guide the feet of his Saints, (1 Sam. 2.9.) Tis possible for a righteous man sometime to be without counsel, he may neither know what counsel to give himfelf, nor what to take from others; as Teboshaphat said in his Areight (2 Chron. 20. 12.) He knoweth not what to do; yet (as Jehoshaphat said then) his eyes are towards the Lord, and the Lords eyes are towards him. When he is thus counselless, there is a counselling, a directing eye of God upon him; though he at that present know not his way, yea, be out of his way, yet he is not out of Gods eye, and that will in due time thew him his way, or bring him into his way again: though God suffer him to go out of the way, yet the eye of God is upon him, even when he is out of his way, and that eye will reduce and bring him back to his right way. There is a directing, a counselling eye of God.

Thirdly, The Scripture speaks of a pitying and a compassionating eye of God. It is ordinary with us to hear those that are in distress cry out to those who pass by, cast an eye upon us, look upon us, and that is as much as to say, pity us, have compassion upon us; this eye of pity the Lord doth not withdraw from the righ-

teous.

Hence note;
The righteous are under the compassionating, the pitying eye of God.

When the people of Ifrael were in Egypt, the Lord said to Moses, (Exod. 3. 7.) I have surely seen the affilition of my people; and what kind of sight was that? what eye of God was it which was upon them? the words following, and the whole series of Gods dealings also clear it, that it was an eye of compassion; I have surely seen, or seeing I have seen the affiction of my people that are in Egypt, &c. and I am some down to deliver them. We read in that notable place, (Gen. 16.14.) when Hagar was in a very sad and diffressed condition, being cast out of Abrahams family,

family, God had compassion on her, and shewed her a Well, where she might have water for her self and child, and the text saith, she called the name of the Well Beer-la-hai-roi, that is, the Well of him that liveth and seeth me: As if she had said, God hath seen me in my affished condition, and he hath also had compassion on me. That's another great priviledge, the righteous are under this pitying and compassionating eye of God; and from thence follows,

The south eye of God, his providing eye, his caring eye.

Hence note; The Lord doth so eye the righteous in their straits and afflictions with compassion, that he also provides to deliver them out of

their affliction, out of their fraits.

There is a providing eye of God continually beholding his people : Of this providing eye Abraham spake, (Gen. 22. 14.) when he was put upon that hard task, the facrificing of his own son, his Isaac, the Lord had compassion on him, and provided another sacrifice, and therefore he called the name of that place, Jehovah Fireh, the Lord will fee or provide; that is, as the Lord hath feen and provided for me, so he will see and provide for all his in their greatest exigents and extremities. What Abraham said, all the seed of Abraham may say in the day of their distress, Jehovah Fireh, the Lord will see and provide. And as the Lord hash a seeing and a providing eye for his in times of diffress, so at all times. Mofes faid of the Land of Ifrael, (Deut. 11. 12.) It is a Land of hills and of vallies, a Land which the Lord thy God careth for : The eyes of the Lord thy God are alwayes upon it, from the beginning of the year, even unto the end of the year. The eyes of the Lord are upon the land, that is, upon the people of the land, or upon the land for the peoples sake who dwell in it : What to do? the text answers, to care for it, that is, to provide all things for their good, to give raine in season, and the fruits of the earth, not only so the support, but comfort of his people. We read of the same eye promised to the people of Israel in the Land of their captivity, (Fer. 29.6.) I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again into this Land; I will not only give them a look, or a glance, but fix or fet mine eyes upon them for good, that is, to do them good. It is a proverbial saying amongst us, The Masters eye fattens the Horse: The Masters eye is a caring, a providing eye, he will take care that the Horse shall be well fed. Certainly, Gods eye is a fattening eye; they shall be fat and flourish, from whom God will not withdraw his providing eye, at least they shall have necessaries, or food convenient, both for foul and

Fifthly, The Scripture speaks of a delighting eye, or of an eye of complacency; and thus also the Lords eye is upon the righteous, he beholdeth them with high content, he is, as I may fay, taken with them, (Ifa. 66. 1.) To him will I look that is poor. Among all objects, none so pleasant or pleasing to God as the poor. What poor doth he mean? surely the righteous poor, or the poor in spirit, (as was shewed upon the sormer verse) let fuch a one be whom he will, to him will I look, mine eye is greatly pleased to behold such a one. The word used by Elihu in this Text, doth further clear it, while he faith, He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous. How pleasant is any object to our eyes from which we cannot withdraw or take them off, but must be continually feeding them upon it! Some cannot take off their eyes from unlawfull wanton objects, because they are so delighted in them, they have as the Apostle Peter speaks, eyes full of adultery, and such can never glut their eyes with adulterous objects. Now certainly the Lord is exceedingly taken with the beauty, the spiritual beauty of a righteous person, with the comliness, the spirituall comliness of those that are godly, when the Text saith, He withdraweth not his eyes from them, but carries them (as it were) alwayes in his eye. Among the Latines, to carry one in our eye is an expression of singular high content, delight and pleasure taken in such a person. We may say of all the righteous, the Lord carrieth them in his eye, and therefore he is highly pleased and delighted with them.

In oculà aliquem gestare, est eum vehementer ample-&i & diligere.

Thus you have this five-fold eye, which the Lord doth not withdraw from the righteous; and, in that the text faith, he doth not withdraw or abate or diminish his eye from them, but looks fully upon them, it gives us this fixth note;

The inspection of God upon, his compassion towards, his care of, his delight in the right com is perpetual.

Though God doth afflict, yet he never ceaseth to love or care for his people. Elihu was much upon that, industriously to remove the scandal of the crosse, which 'tis like then did and still doth offend many, and causeth them to flumble, when they see the righteous afflicted; therefore he would affure us, that God never withdraweth his eye from them: but his care of, and pity to, yea Non folum Sapleasure in them is everlasting. That eye of his which carries all tagentem attenthis in it, is never thut towards them. The Lord faith of the tamg; curam Church, (Ifa. 49. 16.) Thy walls are continually before me. As denotat hac the walls of Sion, so the walls of every righteous person in Zion, severamen, or of every true Sionist, are continually before the Lord, he with- continuam midrameth not his eyes from the righteous; He that keepeth Israel shall nimeq; defleneither flumber nor fleep, (Pial. 121.4.) he that neither flum- Heutem. Bold: bers nor fleeps, needs not withdraw his eyes from us, and he that hath a tender regard to us, will not. The Prophet (Ifa. 27. 3.) speaking of the Church under the Allegory of a Vineyard, brings in the Lord giving this affurance, I will water in every moment, I will keep it night and day. He that waters a Vineyard every moment, never withdraws his eyes from it; now by watering is meant the supply of whatsoever good the Vineyard or Church of God flood in need of; to be so supplyed is to be well watered. The providence of God, as to our spirituall and temporall estate, watcheth over us continually to water us.

But some may question here, Doth not the Lord withdraw his eyes from the righteous? are his eyes continually upon them? what then is the meaning of that Scripture, (Pfal. 44. 23.) and of several others of like importance; Awake Lord, why Reepest thou? That was at once the voyce of the Church, and her complaint; surely the Lords eyes were withdrawn from the Church when he was afleep. I answer, The Lord sleeps, with respect to his Church, as the Church sleeps with respect to the Lord, (Cant. 5. 2.) I fleep (saigh the Spoule) but my heart waketh. Indeed the Lord doth act sometimes so rewards the righteous, or lets things go so with the righteous, as if he were asleep, as if he took no notice of them, yet still his heart waketh towards them: So that his fleeping doth not imply an intermission of his care, but only a suspension of the effects of his care. For while the Lord lets things so so as if he were affeep, he then wakes and watches as much over the righteous, over his Church and people, as at any other time, when they have the highest actings of his providence for their outward peace and prefervation.

And

And if that other fort of Scriptures should be objected against his perpetual watching over the righteous, or that he never withdraws his eyes, which fay, he hiderh his face, and turns himself away from them. I answer, Those Scriptures are all of them to be understood according to the former interpretation, the Lord hideth himself, as to sense and present appearance, but he never hideth himself, as to the real continuance of his love and care towards his Church or People. This Objection some made to one of the Ancients; the Lord (faid they) may feem to withdraw his eyes from the righteous, because he suffers them to fall under the oppression of the unrighteous. No, saith he, The Lord beholds the righteons, though they perish by the hand of the uzrighteous; yea, when it is worst with them, the Lords Eye is apon them for good, both to see how they earry it, or behave themselves in their Sufferings, and diterrecompen-likewise to provide a full reward and recompence for them after all set. Greg: in their sufferings.

Famulos suos nunc m'gis, repicit, nam jam prævidet, quid

Before I pass from this part of the verse, let me make these two

Inferences.

First, If the Lord never withdraweth his Eyes from the rightcons, then let the righteous know their own Priviledge and Mercy. How happy are they upon whom the Eyes of the Lord abide alwayes for good! The Lord cannot endure to have good men out of his Eye, as Parents fay of their darlings, and Princes of their Favourites. If we were assured, that the Eye of a great man, who loveth us, were alwayes upon us, if he fhould promife to have an eye to us, (That's an ordinary Promise among men, I will have an Eye to you, that is, I will take care of you; if we have (I fay) but fuch a word from a man in Power) we think we have got a great revenue; such a great Lord will have an eye to us, we have his word, he will not take off his care from us. How much then should we boast and rejoyce in spirit, that the Lord hath said, I will alwayes have a care of you, I will never withdraw mine eyes from you, I will never leave you, nor for sake you (Heb. 13.5.) As it will be the eternal happiness of Believers in Glory, alwayes to behold, or see God, Bleffed are the pure in heart, fon they shall see God; they have some fight of him here in a Glass, but they shall see him face to face; that is, they shall see him clearly, as clearly as the creature is capable of seeing or enjoying him; now (I say) as it is the happinels of the Saints in Heaven alwayes to behold God, so it is the

the happiness of Saints here on earth, that the Lord doth alwayes be-

hold them, that his eye is never withdrawn from them.

Confider therefore, you that are in a righteous state, whose acts and words, and walkings, are also righteous, consider your Priviledge, consider what it is to have the Lord Jeius alwayes setting his eye upon you, to have the Lords directing and counselling eye alwayes upon you, to have the Lords pitying and con passionating eye alwayes upon you, to have the Lords providing and caring eye alwayes upon you, to have the Lords delighting and wellpleased eye alwayes upon you; to have the eyes of the Lord thus upon you, and to have them alwayes upon you, what can ye defire more! Thus 'cis promised, (2 Chron. 16. 9.) The eyes of the Lordrun to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them, whose heart is perfect with him. And whose hearts are perfect with him, but the hearts of the righteous? this is their priviledge. Jesus Christ (Zech. 3.9.) is called, The stone, and saith the Text, upon one stone shall be seven eyes. There are two interpretations given of that Prophelie, First, thus, upon one stone shall be seven eyes, that is, the eyes of all men shall be upon that stone, upon Christ. Seven is a perfect definite Number, put for all numbers; the eyes of all thall be upon the stone, upon Christ; although he be to the wicked, or to them that believe not, a stumbling stone, and a rock of offence, (1 Pet. 2.8.) yet to them that believe he is a most precious stone; and as they are alwayes beholding the beauty of that precious stone, so Jesus Christ doth indeed invite all eyes to behold him (1sa. 65. 1.) Behold me, behold me; he would have us take off our eyes from all others, and look steddily on him. Let all eyes be upon the stone; that's a good interpretation. There is a second, which suits the present poynt I am upon fully ; Seven eyes shall be upon one stone; that is, the eyes of God shall be upon Jesus Christ. This is a promise made unto him as Mediator, when he came in the flesh, or in cu: nature, to do that great work for us; Then, faith the Propher, upon one stone shall be seven eyes; which seven eyes note the perfect knowledge of God, and so the perfect care hat God would have of Christ, to bear him up through that work of our Redemption: Upon one stone shall be seven eyer; I will rake care of him, I will provide for him, and I will delight in him. As Jefus Christ is all eye, and Jesus Christ doth enlighten all eyes, that is, all that see,

are enlightened by Jesus Christ; so the eyes of God, the eyes of the Father were alwayes upon him, in favour, in love, in care, when he was here in this world about that great work of our falvacion, and he had abundunt experience of the eyes of his Father upon him. Now, mark it, this was the great promise made to Christ, the Stone, that upon him should be seven eyes, the eyes of the Lord should be alway and fully upon him. And this is the priviledge of every one that hath part and interest in this stone Jesus Christ, every righteous person hath seven eyes upon him, the Lord God beholds him exactly, perfectly, and alwayes; He withdraw-

eth not his eyes from the righteous.

A second inference is this; If the Lord never withdraweth his eyes from the righteous, Then let the righteons know their duty: What's that ? Never to withdraw their eyes from the Lord. There is a threefold eye which a righteous man should never withdraw from God. First, An eye of faith: Secondly, An eye of hope: Thirdly, An eye of dependance : and that, First, for direction in all his wayes; Secondly, for protection in all his dangers. I will lift up mine eyes (faith David, Pial. 121. 1.) unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. And again, (Pfal. 123.1, 2.) Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their Masters, and as the eyes of a mayden unto the hand of her Mistress, sour eyes maite upon the Lord our God, untill he have mercy on eu; that is, we never withdraw our eyes from him, while we have need of his mercy, and that is alwayes. Walk before me, that is, with an eye of faith, hope, and dependance, was the Lords charge to the father of the faithfull, (Gen. 17. 1.) I have fet the Lord alwayes before me, that is, I keep a constant eye upon the Lord, was the profession of David, as the type of Christ, (Pfal. 16.8.) And as to keep an eye on God is best and safest for us, so 'iis extreamly pleasing and contentfull to Christ, as he tells the Church, (Cant. 9. 9.) Thou hast ravished my heart, my Sister, my Spouse, thou hash ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, that is, with a believing, a hoping, a depending look on me for all that good which thou wantest and wouldst have, or with a delighting look on me as thy chiefest good. Let not the righteous withdraw their eyes from God, for he withdraweth not his eyes from the right com.

But (which is yet more) with Kings are they on the Throne.

These words fully clear up the sense, which I have given of that negative promile, he withdraweth not his eyes from the righteone, namely, that the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous for good. His is not a bare beholding of them, favours flow from his eyes. When the eyes of God are upon the righteom, they find the sweet and benefit of ir. In the former verte Elihu faid, God will give the poor right, here he faith more, he will give the poor, the right teous poor, a reward, and that no small one, With Kings are they on the Throne.

The Latine translation reads this part of the verse, not of the Ex reges in Corighteous poor, but of righteous Kings; He withdraweth not his lio collocat in eyes from the righteom, and he placeth Kings upon the Throne perpenant. for ever. That's a truth, the Lord placeth Kings upon their Thrones, and establisheth them there; but that is not the meaning or truth of this place; nor will the Hebrew (with any tolera-

ble convenience) bear such a translation.

Secondly, There are others, who, a little mistaking the word Quasi. which we translate Kirgs, render it Angels; They are with An ביל אם gels on the Throne. There is but very little difference in the ביל ביל אונים אונים אונים ביל אונים Hebrew between those two words that fignifie Kings and Angels, Merc: (the former is Melachim, the latter Maleachim) which hath given occasion for this reading, He placeth them with Angels on the Throne; and so the words are interpreted of the glorious exaltation of the righteous in Heaven, (when indeed they shall be like Angels, Angels Fellows, (Mut. 22. 30.) and walk hand in hand with Angels.) Mr Broughton though he translate (with Kings) yet seems to carry it in that sense, giving his glosse in the Margen, thus; They shall be made fit for light mith the living, with the Angels of God, his fervants, in their degree, and be placed fir ever in bonour, and be high in honeur and dignity; so ye shall sit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel. But this Text will not serve that purpose neither; and therefore Ishall take it plainly as we render it, They shall be with Kings upon the Throne. Cam regibus-There is a two-fold interpretation of the words according to this tartum valet, translation.

First, The Lord will exalt the righteous to great dignity, Bolds they shall be like Kings and Princes in this world, or they shall DITIES DU

ac sicut reges. be cum; ut nume-

rus mutetur, ut passion fit in boc libro. Merc:

transitiva stve fer: facræ 1.9. Thrones to fit upon. c.7.

be in great favour with Kings, even Kings Pavourites.

Secondly, They shall be with Kings upon the Throne, that is, they themselves shall be Kings. The Hebrew strictly read, is, and Kings on the Throne; they shall not only be like Kings, but MR articulus they themselves shall be Kings, and sit upon Thrones: either of accusativi ca- these interpretations reach the scope of Elihu sully. As if he had Sus green verba faid, The righteous shall be greatly advanced or exalted by Kings, allivaregunt; whose priviledge it is to sit on Thrones, or they shall be Kings upaccipitur tomen on the Throne. Some experiences and examples have confirmed non rard pro à this. The Lord hath not only given righteous persons great aden, de, 15 cum vancement, and great favour with Kings, who fit on Thrones, but bes. Drus. Ob. hath even advanced them to Kingly dignity; and given them

A Throne is a Seat Royal, the Seat of Majesty; A Throne is a feat exalted above other feats, as the person sitting upon it is exalted above other persons. Solomon made him a great Throne of Ivory, and the Throne had fix steps, (I Kings 10. 18.) God is represented sitting upon a Throne, and there receiving honour from all that were before him, (Rev. 4. 2, 9.) The whole Heaven is called the Throne of God, and the earth his footstoole, (Isa. 66. 1.) because as Heaven is high above all, so there are the fullest manifestations of the greatness and glory of God. And because Thrones note power and dignity, therefore the Angels (who among all meer creatures excell in power and dignity,) are called Thrones, (Col. 1. 16.) So then, to be with Kings on the Throne, that is, to be near them, and much accepted by them, is a very great honour; and that is the least here intended. But to be Kings on the Throne, is the greatest worldly honour; and possibly so much is here intended the righteous, while Elibu faith, But with Kings are they upon the Throne.

In that the righteous are faid here to be with Kings upon the

Throne, we learn,

Righteons persons are in high esteem with God:

He would not thus, in love, fet them high, if he did not highly esteem them; he would not thus prefer them, if he did not know their worth. The world usually judges righteous persons, as if they were fit only for the dunghill, as if they were the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things, (: Cor. 4. 13.) but God hath another opinion of them, he thinks them fit to serve Princes, and to be near the Throne. Take heed of judging them unworthy to be at the soo: sool, whom God thinks worthy to be with Kings on the Throne.

Secondly, Note; God hath exalted, and will exalt right eous persons.

Chap. 36.

Whom he highly esteems, he sometimes advanceth highly in this world, they shall be with Kings on the Throne, (Pfal. 107. 40, 41. He powreth contempt upon Printes, that is, upon unrighteous Princes ; yet (as it followeth) He setteth the poor on high from affliction, so we translate and put in the Margen, He setteth the poor on high after affliction. He afflicts the righteous to purge them, and so to prepare and fit them for greatest enjoyments. We have a like affirmation, (Pfal. 113.7,8.) He raifeth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the needy out of the dunghill, that he may fet them with Princes, even the Princes of his people. Thus spake Hannah in her Song, (1 Sam. 2.8.) and thus, in effect, spake the blessed Virgin in hers, (Luke 1. 52.) He hath brought down the mighty from their feats, and hathexalted the lowly and meek. We have some Scripture-instances of such exaltations. Joseph, a righteous person, was cast into bonds, yet God sets him, not only at liberry, but on high, he was with the King on the Throne, Only in the Throne, (said Pharaoh, Gen. 42. 40.) will I be greater than thou; and all were commanded to bow the knee to, him. David, a righteous person, followed the Ewes great with young, and the Lord fet him upon the Throne, upon the Throne of Ifrael. Valentinian was committed to prison by the command of Julian the Apostate, because he struck an Idolatrous Priest, that would have sprinkled him (agua lustrali) with their unholy holy water, as he flood in the gate of the Temple, where Tulian was facrificing to his Idol-gods; yet he escaped that danger, and afterwards ascended the Throne of that Great Empire. The Lord knows both how to deliver the righteous out of trouble, and to bring them to honour.

Lastly, We may hence inser, If the righteous are with Kings on the Throne, then righteousness hath a remard. Them that honour me (saith the Lord, 1 Sam. 2.30.) I will honour. It is no vaine thing to serve the Lord; to be righteous, and to do righte-

Yet, let me add, by way of Caution, that neither this Text, nor the notes given from it, are so to be understood, as if all righteous persons might hence expect great advancements in this world, or to be the special Favourites of Kings and Princes : The word of God doth not feed such humours, but mortifies them; nor doth it cherish any such aspiring expectations in righteous men, but teaches them quiet submission in their own private stations and callings, to those who are upon the Throne. So that while Elihu saith of the righteous, With Kings are they on the Throne; his meaning must be taken soberly, and may be taken di-Rincely, thus;

First, That God hath great respect to, and high savours for

righteous men.

Secondly, That he brings some of them (as it is said of Daniel with the Prince of the Eunuches, Chap. 1.9.) into favour

and tender love with Kings and Princes.

Thirdly, That the Lord hath often advanced righteous persons to Thrones and Kingly Dignities. And when-ever the Lord advanceth any of the righteous, he makes good this promife, besemper, tamen cause in the exaltation of one, the faith and piety of all righteous persons, or the whole kind of them, is honoured and exalted.

Fourthly, To be fure, all the righteous shall be with Kings rundam piorum on the Throne hereafter. Christ hath purchased, and is gone to noratur. Coc. prepare a Kingdome for the righteous, and will give them a better Crown, than any this world affords, an incorruptible one. As now the righteous are spiritual Kings, or Kings in a spiritual sense, (Rev. 1.6.) that is, they rule over and keep in subjection, their own lusts and corruptions, pride, ambition, love of the world, wrath, envy, and whatever else in them doth rebell and exalt it selfagainst the knowledge of God; yea, they as Kings (in this world) conquer the world by faith, (1 Joh. 5. 4.) and the Prince of this world, the devil, through the power of Jesus Chriff(as I say all the righteous are now spiritual Kings (in the sense given)

through grace here on earth, so they shall be glorious Kings and

reigne with Christ for ever in Heaven; and then shall this word of

Etiamfi id externe non fiat omnium fides & pietas quoof God by Elihu, be fulfilled to the utmost, With Kings are they upon the Throne,

Yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.

Elibu proceeds to shew the happiness of the righteous yet further; The Lord doth not only advance them, but establish them; nor doth he only establish them for a while, but even perpetuateth their establishment, He establisheth them for ever. The word dice 20 feis, He makes them fit. We render fully to the fense, He establish- dere, O in hac eth them. The Lord fets them up on high, and then fettles them conjugatione, on high. Some get on high, but they cannot keep on high, they Jedere feet. find no establishment there; but God can establish

For ever.

The for ever of this world is a long time. The Lord faith of Sien, (Pfal. 132. 14.) Here will I dwell for ever, that is, long. Thus in the text, He will establish them for ever, that is, they shall have long establishment. And if we take it as to their exaltation in the other world, there God will establish them to the utmost latitude of for ever, that is, to eternity. The Septuagint translate, &is vixos in He will establish them to victory. The same word in the Hebrew, victorism. fignifies eternity, and also victory, because eternity overcomes Sept: and triumphs over all: The Lord shall fettle them to victory; and Sic 2 Sam. 2. that may have a good interpretation, with respect to the power of will als vixos God in fetling them; He shall fettle them to victory, that is, they warran in in shall (in his power) overcome all difficulties that stand in the equipment. way of their eftablishment, so A Herigid earen agid en eu ist and

Hence Note : treath of achip them !; Hence Note As preferment, so establishment is from God.

First, He establisheth all things, whether they be, First, natural things, the heavens and the earth, times and feasons, (Gen. 8. 22.) or Secondly, Civil things, States and Nations; or Thirdly, Spiritual things; First, the Golpel, and the Church of the Gospel, that he establisheth as a Rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevaile, (Mat. 16. 18. so Ifa. 44. 28. Pfal. 87. 5.) Secondly, Grace in the hearts of his people, (1 Per. 5. 10.) and them in the wayes of grace, (2 Thes. 2.17. Chap. 3.3.) Thus God establisheth all things. The store of the store

Secondly,

Secondly, He establishesth, counsels and actions, (Isa. 44. 26.) He confirmeth the word of his servants, and performeth the counsel of his Messengers; that is, he makes good, and brings to estact that word which they have given in counsel. And as for actions, Moses prayeth (Psal. 90. 17.) Establish thou the work of our hands upon us, yea the work of our hands establish thou it. Whatever is in our hands quickly molders away, and (as the enemies said when the Jewes built the walls of Jerusalem, Neh. 4. 3.) If a Fox go up uponit, it will fall, unless the Lord establish it; but neither the Foxes with their subtilty, nor the Lyons with their power and cruelty, shall be able to overthrow that wall, or those actions, which the Lord is pleased to establish; for he doth establish them

For ever.

Hence Note;

The Lord can establish, not only for a time, but for alwayes; he can give a perpetuity of establishment, not only a lasting, but an everlasting establishment; he can give an eternity of establishment.

Here is compleat happiness. What can we desire more, than First, to be in a great and good estate; Secondly, to be established there; Thirdly, to be established for ever? They that are set high areset in slippery places, unless the Lord be with them; how much more if the Lord be against them? (Pfal. 73. 18.) But the Lord can set us as high as the highest Rock, and yet make us as firme as the sirmest Rock. He doth establish them for ever,

And they are exalted.

Some read thus, He establisheth them for ever, when they are exalted, which makes a very clear sense; when they are got high, the Lord doth establish them fully and finally. We render it as a distinct act of God, They are established for ever, and they are exalted; probably intending thus much; that the Lord when he will do a thing, can do it, notwithstanding all opposition, that either is or can be made against it; he sets them with Kings on the Throne, and doth establish them for ever, yea, they rise in power and dignity more and more, They are exalted.

Hence

Hence Note; What God will do, shall be done;

If he faith to a person, be exalted, he shall be exalted; if he saith to ferusalem, thou shalt be built, and to the Temple, thy foundation shall be laid, (Isa. 44. 28.) it is done; if he saith, pull down Babylon, down it must come, even to the very foundation. Ephraim said, (Fer. 30. 18.) Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised; I found the effects of thy chastisement, it came home to me. What God will work, no man can lett or put a stop to.

Further, From the other reading, Note;

Whom God fets up, no man can pull down, till himfelf pleafeth;

He doth establish them for ever, when they are exalted. God is able to maintain his own acts, whether in casting any down, or exalting them. When God laid the mountains and heritage of Esau wast for the Dragons of the Wilderness, (Mal. 1. 3.) Edons said at the next verse, (well, I see) we are impoverished, but we will return, and build the desolate places. As if Edom had said, Though the Lord hath brought us thus low, yet we doubt not to recover our former glory. But what faith the Lord? hear what in the next line; Thus faith the Lord of Hosts, They shall build, (or let them build) but I will throw down. Now (Isay) as when the Lord pulls down, none can build without his leave, fo whom the Lord exalteth, none can pull down; He establisheth them for ever, when they are exalted. Thus Elihu fets forth the exceeding kindness of God to, and his care over the righteous, not only his provident care as to their present condition, but as to the abiding of their emaltation and the establishment of it for ever.

JOB, Chap. 36. Vers. 8, 9, 10.

8. And if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction:

9. Then he sheweth them their work, and their

transgressions, that they have exceeded:

10. He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.

Hese three verses hold forth three things in particular, all which concern the righteous, of whom Elihu faid in the former verse, not only, that God doth not withdraw his eyes from them, but establishesh them on high, or advancesh them highly in

First, That possibly they may be cast into sore affictions, even after their exaltation, & the newly promised lastingnes of it, (v.8.)

Secondly, That the procuring cause of these afflictions, is their own fin ; for we find mention of their transgression in the oth verse, and of their iniquity in the tenth.

Thirdly, That the purpose and designe of God towards them, when they have brought themselves into streights, & are cast into an afflicted condition, is very gracious, and tends to their everlasting good. And this designe is three-fold.

First, To discover their sin to them; that's laid down at the oth verse, Then he sheweth them their work, and their transgref-

Gons.

Secondly, To prepare them for a better receiving of faithful counsel and instruction, at the 1 oth verse, He openeth also their

ear to discipline.

Thirdly, To bring them quite off from their fin; that's expressed in the close of the 10th verse, and commandeth that they return from iniquity. These are the parts, this the purpose of the Context under hand;

Vers. 8. And if they be bound in fetters.

There is some question who are to be understood as the Antecedent to this, they, if they, who are they ? Some, because the words following speak of transgression and iniquity, conceive, that surely it must be meant of wicked men, or of the ungodly; but E-l hu comes not upon that subject til the 13th verse; there he turns his speech to such, but the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath, &c. Therefore here he doth not speak of, or to, wicked, but righteous men, salling into trouble and affliction; they, that is, the righteous, &c.

Again, Taking righteous men to be the Antecedent (as the text plainly carries it) yet there is a difference in opinion, whether we are to understand Elibu speaking of righteous men in that special dignity described at the 7th verse, such as are with Kings on the Throne, or of righteous men in general: I conceive we may un-

derstand the text of either. And therefore,

First, When Elihusaith, If they be bound in fetters, he may intend those righteous men who were so highly exalted in the former verse, such a change may come upon them; even they who were with Kings on the Throne, may come to be bound in fetters,

and kolden in the cords of affliction.

Secondly, He may intend it of righteous men in any other condicion; for Elihu having shewed how graciously God dealerh in exalting some righteous men, sheweth that God is gracious atsounto those that are not exalted, even unto those that are greatly afflicted, and brought very low. Briefly, as in the former verse he spake of righteous men listed up, so here of righteous men cast down: As if he had said, If any of the righteous are at any time so far from being exalted with Kings on the Throne, that they are cast upon the danghill, and are brought into great streights, yet it is not because God takes no care of them, or because he hath cast them out of his favour; but it is thus with righteons men for many bleffed ends and purpofes, which God bath upon them, or towards them, to shew them their sin, to sit them for instruction, and to bring them off from their iniquity. Thus the words prevent an objection; for Elihu having said, he withdraweth not his eyes from the righteem, but with Kings are they on the Throne, some might say, You can shew us very few such fights, you can shew us few righteous men with Kings on the Throne, or exalted highly in this world; and we can shew you many righteous men in great trouble, in fetters and cords of affliction. Well, faith Elibu, suppose it be to, suppose you find many righteous men in such a low condition,

yet God withdraweth not his eyes from them, no not then; yea, he is doing them good by all the evils that they suffer. So then, if this relative they referre to righteous men in either capacity, either to such as were before exalted, and are now afflicted, or to such righteous men as were never so exalted, yea as are depressed and cast into an afflicted condition, yet God withdraweth not his eyes from them, but still continues his care of them, and tenderness towards them.

If they be bound in fetters, and holden by the cords of affliction.

Here are two hard words, bound and holden, bound as captives, bound as prisoners, bound in setters, yea, and holden in cords, holden or caught as a poor bird in a net or snare, or as a wild beast in a toyle. Bound in setters, and holden in cords. These fetters and sords may be understood two wayes.

First, Literally and properly, it is possible for a righteous man to be bound in fetters, and holden in cords, plainly so called. Joseph was cast into prison, and the Iron entred into his soul, and his

teet were hurt in the Stocks, in material Stocks.

Secondly, We may expound these fetters and cords figuratively, or meraphorically, and so any trouble or streight is as a fetter, and as a cord: Thus to be bound in fetters, and holden in cords, is but an expression signifying any afflicted condition. Fetters and cords are Emblems of flavery & captivity. The Prophet foreshewing the willing contribution of divers strange Nations towards the help of the Temes in their return from the Babylonish captivity, as also, beyond that, their subjection to Christ and the power of the Gospel, gives it under this shadow, (Isa. 45. 14.) Thus faith the Lord, the labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia, and of the Sabeans, men of stature shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine, (that is, they shall yeild themselves to thee as thy subjects, and more) they shall come after thee in chaines, they shall come over; that is, they shall follow thee as captives do a conquering enemy, in chaines. In what chaines? the meaning is not, that they shall come with chaines of Iron upon their bodies; but even the floutest, greatest, & richest of them shall humbly submit, they shall come even as prisoners, with their chaines about them, supplicating and intreating thy favour. We read in the holy History of the Kings, that the servants of Benhadad came with ropes about their necks

necks to Ahab, they came with material ropes about their necks Vinsula funt in token of their abatement and readiness to submit unto what fen- ferviuun Symtence soever the King of Ifrael should lay upon them. To come with ropes and chains, is, in Scripture Language, to come in deepest humiliation; and to be bound in chaines and fetters, is to be in greatest affliction. That's the sense of the Prophet (1/a.28.22.) Now therefore be ye not mockers (there were some that derided him, threatning judgement in the name of the Lord, take heed of that) left your bands be made strong; that is, lest God bring you into such great afflictions, that you shall find and feel your selves (as it were) in bands, or (as Elibu expresseth it in the Text) bound in fetters, and holden in the cords of affliction. So then, this notes in general any state of trouble or forrow, of milery or calamity that befalls us here below, (Pfal. 107. 10.) They that fit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron; that is, as fast bound in affliction, as if they were bound in iron. Thus here

Holden in cords of affliction.

Some translate, cords of paverty; the same word fignifying both 110 777 affliction & poverty, because poverty is so great an affliction. Here's Funibus pauthe case, this is the condition into which Elihus supposeth righteous men may fall; They may be bound in fetters, and holden in quicquid premit cords of affliction. Taking the words as they refer to righteous of constringit; men in general, observe,

The best of men may fall into the worst outward condition;

They may be in a condition of captivity, they may be in reall tur pignza, quo fetters and cords, or they may be in a state of affliction, as bad to them as setters and cords. I have heretosore, more than once, spoparsen of the afflictions of the righteous in the opening of this Book, turientium, therefore I shall not stay upon it here. Only take notice that the lighteous may come into setters, &c. not only for tryall of their graces, but for the punishment of their iniquities; they possibly have not kept close to the bands of duty, and therefore God brings them into the bands of calamity. As wicked men say in the pride and stoutness of their hearts, (Psal. 2. 3.) Come, let us break their bands, and cast their cords from us; that is, those bands of duty and cords of obedience which the Gospel layeth upon them; So,

Funibus paufortatu. Vulg: 70 Dicitur quicquid premit is confiringit; quare appellalatione Funis comprehenditur pignun, quo obligatur home, is dolor præfertim parin a degree, good men, righteous men, may throw off the cords of obedience, and the bands of duty, through the violence of corruption and temptation, walking loosely & vainly for a season, they may break the bands of the Gospel Covenant, and the cords of the Commandement, and when they do so, God will not spare them, but will throw them even into the bands of trouble and into the cords of affliction; they shall know the setters and bands of affliction, threatned in the Law, when they have not carefully kept to the rule of the Law.

Secondly, Taking the righteous in that special tapacity, for such as were once exalted, and in high place, or as 'tis said in the former verse, With Kings on the Throne, and sinding them here in fetters and bands, Note,

The worldly state of good, of righteous men, as well as others, is subject to change.

For though that text saith, He establisheth them, yet it is not to be understood that God doth so establish righteous men in their places, that they can never be put out of them, or so exalt them, that they shall never be pulled down; that text sheweth what God can do, he can exalt them so, that they shall not be removed for ever, and he often exalts them so, but he doth not so alwayes; for the outward estates of good men may have as great changes, as the outward estate of wicked men have : they may come from thrones to prisons, and from chaines of gold to fetters of Iron. There have been many fuch changes as to the things of the world, even to those that are not of the world; And as Heathen Princes and Kings have often found fuch changes, fo also did several of the Kings of Judah, they were brought from the throne to the prifon. Zedekiah and Jeckoniah and Manaffeh, had such sad changes; when they highly provoked God, they came from their Thrones to the prison, from a Crown to the cords of affliction; yea this hath been the lot of many other righteous men exalted, they have been brought to the prison, and laid very low in this world. Solomon faith of one, (Esclef. 4. 14.) Out of prison he cometh to reigne, and of another he faith in the same verse, He also that is borne in his Kingdome becomesh poor; such vicissitudes and revolutions come over the heads of the children of men, yea good men are not exempted from such changes and revolutions. Therefore be

not offended if at any time you fee good men in chaines and fetters, in a condition of great affliction.

Thirdly, From the manner of expression, When they are bound in setters, and holden in cords. Affliction is set sorth and described by cords and setters.

Hence note;
Afflictions are grievous to the flesh.

Are not fetters so? are not cords so? The word here translated cords, is several times in Scripture applyed to fignifie the pains of a woman in travel; those are most dolorous paines; such are some afflictions. The Apostle speaking of affliction in generall, (Heb. 12. 11.) faith, No chastning for the present seemeth to be Joyann, but grievous. Tis no easie thing to be in fetters and cords, to be bound in chaines. Afflictions streighten, and press, pinch & gall like fetters, they burthen the flesh, they are no light matters. Though the Apostle, comparatively to the weight of glory, calleth the heaviest outward offictions light, (2 Cor. 4.17.) yet first, in themselves; and secondly, to our slesh, they are very heavy. Therfore we should pity those that are in affiction, as those that are in fetters and cords, and we mould pray for those that are in affliction, as for those that are bound. Every affliction is a kind of captivity: If they be bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction; thus it may be with the righteous. But is not this an argument that God hates them? furely no; we read the mind of God towards them notwithstanding this in the next verse.

Vers. 9. Then he sheweth them their work;

That is, when they are in cords and fetters. But did he never shew them their work before? yes, doubtless he did; but then especially and essectually, then he sheweth, he declareth, he makes manifest to them, or he causeth them to see and know their work. The word in that conjugation signifieth, not barely to shew, but to make them see, under stand and consider their work; he brings them to a review of what they have done, and to see that they have done amiss. Then he sheweth; it is a shewing with power, an essions shewing, he sheweth them their work: What work? this their work may be considered two wayes.

First, As to the matter of ir, what they had done. Till we see

what we have done, we repent not of what we have done, how much foever it ought to be repented of; as the Lord complained

of Israel by the Prophet (Fer. 8. 6.) No man repented of his wickednesse, saying, What have I done?

Secondly, As to the vitiousnesse or salsenesse of it, He sheweth them their work, that is, either what they had done which was evil in the matter of it, or what they had done in an evil manner, though in it self good; he sheweth them the evil of their work, the irregularity, the crookednesse, and sintulatese of their work. That this is the meaning, appeareth plainly in the words that sollow, Then he sheweth them their work, and their transgression; that is, that there is some transgression or fault, possibly many faults and transgressions, in their work. Then he sheweth them their work.

Hence Note, First, Sin is properly the work of man;

That is, of the flesh in man (Gal. 5. 19.) The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, Adultery, &c. Good is Gods work in us, evil is our work against the mind of God. Sin is often called the work of our hands, (Pfal. 28.4.) Give them after the work of their hands, render to them their defert; that is, what they have deserved by their sins. Moses declared his sear and holy jealousie concerning the children of Israel in this Language, (Deut. 31. 29.) I know that after my departure, ye will utterly corrupt your selves, because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger by the work of your hands. Idolatry is specially called the work of mans hands, because Idolaters either worthip that as a god, or God by that, which their hands have wrought (Rev. 9. 20.) They repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship Devils, and Idols of Gold, and Silver, and Brasse, &c. Yet Idolatry is much more the work of the heart, than of the hand. And as Idolatry, so any other sin, whether of heart or tongue, may be called the work of our hand, it being that which is most properly our work, though originally the Devils work. As to pardon fin, is properly the work of God, fo to commit fin, is properly the work of man. There is no work fo much ours, as that; no work properly ours, but bad work; all the good we do, is the work of God in us, or by us.

Secondly

Secondly, Note;

Man doth not see the falseness and faultiness of his own work,

till God sheweth it him.

There may be many cracks and flaws in our good works, which we perceive not; we are ready to think and fay, Ali's well, we have done very well, until God lets us fee our work in his light, in the light of his Word and Spirit; and then we shall see cause to be humbled for those works which we were proud of, and sometimes boasted in. The Prophet (Haggai 1. 5.) called the Jews to consider their ways; they saw their wayes, but they considered not their wayes, and therefore they saw not the evil and error of their wayes. As we see many of the works of God, yet see not the excellency or admirable contrivance of them, till himself sheweth it; so we see many of our own works, yet we see not the sinfulnesse, vanity, and solly that is in them, till God saew it unto us; he maketh us seeour work as it is.

Thirdly, From the circumstance of time, when it is that the Lord sheweth unto man his work, the salseness of his work; the Text saith, Then he shewerh them their work, that is, when they

are bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction.

Hence Note;

The badness or sinfulness of our works, is most usually, and most cleerly discovered to us in times of affliction; then sheweth he them their work.

Fosephs Brethren did a very ill work in selling him into Egypt, and in putting off their Father with a lye; yet they took little notice of this work for many years; but when they were bound in fetters, and holden in the cords of affliction, when they came down into Egypt for Corn, and were in great streights, through the policy of their Brother to discover them, not out of any design to hurt them, Then they said one to another, we are verily guilty concerning our Brother (Gen. 42.21.) And (vers. 22.) Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child, and ye would not hear? therefore behold also his blood is required: Then their sin appeared to them in bloody colours, then that sinsulness of their work appeared to them, which they saw not before.

Assultion is a dark condition, yet it brings

much light into the foul: Affliction brings light to discover our works of da knesse, that is, the sinsulnesse of our works; troubles make Comments upon our works, afflictions expound our actions, and thew where the error of them is. We are usually very blind to fee or discern a fault in our selves, or in what we have done, untill God openeth our eyes, by laying a crosse upon our backs; Then he heweth them their work,

And their transgressions that they have exceeded.

Vulg.

Here we see (as was toucht before) what kind of works they Scelera corum. are which God sheweth them in affliction; works of transgression, or the transgreffion of their works. The Vulgar Latine renders the Text by a harder word, Their mickednesses, or villanies. Others by a word of no leffe, if not of a more hard and harsh fignification, He sheweth them their prevarication; as if they had deale eunningly and treacherously with God, not plainly, clearly, and above board, as if they had used tricks and policies very much unbecoming righteous persons. Most give it a more easie title (as we) translating by a word that will comply with any fin, transgreffion; every fin, the least fin is a transgreffion; Sin is a transgreffion of the Law in the very nature of it; and taking the word in this lowest, and most favourable notion,

Nomen boc usurpatur eti. am de levioribus vitis. Druf.

Observe:

God will not spare, he will not spare the righteous for their transgressions, or lefter faults, if they do not judge and humble them-

If their fins be but flips, the Lord will make them know what they have done.

But there feemeth to be a great aggravation in the Text, upon these transgressions, which more than intimares that they are no small ones; for 'tis added, And their transcressions,

That they have exceeded.

Some read the words in the Present Tense, or time, He sheweth them their transgressions, when they exceed or prevail: As if the meaning were, God doth not suffer the fins of righteous perfons to grow too potent and prevalent upon them, but takes them in time, and nips their fins in the bud, when he fees they begin to

grow strong upon them, least if let alone, they might be foyled by them, and so fall into open scandal, or be hardly with-drawn from them. It is no easie thing to master and mortifie a lust, when once it bath got head, and therefore it is a very gracious work of God, to shew a man his fin convincingly, and humble him for ir, when he perceives it rifing in strength. This is a pious sense and profitable. We read it in the past time,

When they have exceeded.

That is, when these righteous persons have exceeded much in their transgressions. As much as to say, when they have sinned exceedingly, or when their fins are many and great, when (according to the Hebrew) they are waxen mighty, then the Lord fees it high time to deal withthem.

The word which we render exceeded, comes from a root that 1797 fignifieth a strong, or mighty man, and in the Verb, to act strongly and mightily; as if Elibs had faid, He sheweth them that they have finned like Giants and mighty men, they have finned greatly, grievously. And 'tis possible for those that are righteous in their state to fin greatly; not only to transgresse, but to exceed in their transgressions, that they have exceeded.

Hence Note, First, There is an excessiveness, or an exceedingness in some fins.

All men sin, but the sins of all men, at least all the fins of all good men, do not exceed; they are not all of a high stature, they are not all strong and mighty fins, as the Lord by his Prophet called those of Israel (Amos 5. 12.) We usually distinguish of fins; some are sins in the excesse, and some in the defect; Prodigality is a fin in the excess, and Parcimony is a fin in the defect; Superstition is a fin in the excess, when men will worship God more than he requires, or in what he requires not; Prophaneness, or neglect of Worship, as also negligence in Worship, are sins in defect. Thus some sins are in the excess, others in the defect, yet every transgression hath a kind of excess in it, and some are exceedingly excessive. And because when any exceedingly exceed in finning, their fins may be faid to reign; therefore (I suppose) Mr. Branghton translates this Text so, And that their trespasses reigned. For, though as to a course of sin, it is inconfiltent Gg2

fiftent with the state of a righteous man, that sin should reigne in him, yet as to this or that act it may reigne; sin may reigne over, and bring under a godly man by the violence of a present temptation, though it cannot reigne over him (as it doth over the wicked) by a willing submission. As the best sin alwayes, so sometimes they have sinned greatly, they have exceeded. Davids sin exceeded, his sin, as to that act, master'd and reigned over him. Solomons sin exceeded, when in his old age his wives turned away his heart to other gods, (I Kings II. 4.) And Peters sin exceeded, when he denied his Master. The righteous are not exempt from a particular reigne of sin, though through grace, they are delivered from the reigne of any the least particular sin. As there is no kind, so no degree of sin, but a godly man may fall into it, except that against the holy Ghost, and totall Apostacy from his profession.

Secondly, God sheweth them that they have exceeded, that's

it which God sheweth them in their affliction.

Hence observe; Many see their sin, that do not see the exceedingness of their sin, or that they have exceeded in sin.

Not only natural and carnal men, who see that they have sinned, do not at all see the exceedingness of their sin, but some good men see that they have sinned, but see not presently the exceeding, no nor half, the evil of their sin; therefore, saith Elihn, He showeth them their transgression, that they have exceeded. Paul before his conversion, knew that he had sinned, but he knew not the sinsulness of his sin, which yet afterwards was to him exceeding sinfull, (Rom. 7. 13.) As it is the height of our corruption to commit sins exceeding sinfull, so it is a very high poynt of grace, to see the exceeding sinfulness of our sm.

You will say, how is it that fin doth exceed, or wherein con-

fifts the exceedingness of it? I answer,

First, There is an exceedingness of sin, in the strength that it hath over us, when it doth easily command and prevaile, then we fin exceedingly, or then sin is exceeding sinfull, it hath got a mighty hand over us. O how sadly do the sins of many exceed thus! they are held down by their corruptions as slaves and captives, they cannot get themselves out from under the power of a base lust.

lust. As the devil leads some, so lusts and corruptions lead others captive at their will, they are at the beck and command of sin. Thus sin exceeds in the wicked, who either know not God, or who

walk daily contrary to their knowledge. Secondly, That man doth exceed in his transgression, or his transgression doth exceed, who sins with, or hath a very ill frame of heart in finning. Many a good man falls into fin, and yet he hath not, as I may fay, a base or wicked frame of heart in sinning, but his very finning is, upon the matter, against his own heart, and the bent of his spirit, his heart goeth not with it. The more of the heart or will is mingled with any fin, the more exceeding finfull it is. I may say of some men (I would not be mistaken) That they do evill with a better frame of heart, than others do good; there are fome that do good with very bad, yea with base hearts; The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination; how much more when he brings it with a wicked mind, or (as we put in the Margin) with wickedness, (Pro. 21. 27.) that is, either for applause, to be seen of men, or for profit, to gain by men, or in malice, the better to compass revenge upon any man, or fort of men; under all which covers, wicked men have brought their facrifices, that is, have appeared in the outward worship of God, or have taken up the form of godliness. And whosoever doth thus, bath a far worse frame of heart in doing good, than a good man hath in doing evil: who though he doth evil, yet he delights not in it, and closes not with it. By how much any mans heart is more taken with fin, by fo much the more finfull it is.

Thirdly, The exceedingness of a sin may be measured by the circumstances of sinning; then a man may be said to transgress, and exceed in transgression, when he sinneth, First, against light, against the checks of his own conscience within; as also, Secondly, when he sins against reproofs, warnings, and admonitions from without; that man exceeds in sin, who hath been told of it, and yet goeth on. Thirdly, that man exceeds in sin, who sins in the midst of much mercy, and daily received or renewed favours; as also he, Fourthly, who sins in the midst of many afflictions and judgements, whether upon his person and family, or upon the Nation where he liveth: such as these not only sin or transgress, but exceed in transgression. Now the Lord in times of affliction sheweth men these and the like exceedings of their transgression,

and causeth them to confess, not only that they are sinners, and have transgressed, but they are brought upon their knees to confels, that they have exceeded in transgression. And when this is done, the Lord goeth on yet further to perfect the work of humiliation and repentance, while they are bound in fetters, and holden in the cords of affliction; for then, as it followeth,

Vers. 10. He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.

Still 'tis Gods work, he sheweth before, and here, he openeth : as in the former verse he openeth their eyes to see, so in this he openeth their ear to hear.

He openeth their ear.

771 Revelavit occulta for abscondita: revelatio auris notat intimam insinuationem.

This latter is more than the former, this opening the ear to difcipline, is more than a shewing of sin, and the exceeding sinfulness of it: Opening the ear, imports a close and home-discovery of a mans condition to him, (Pfal. 51. 6.) David, after his great fin, perceived the Lord shewing him, or making him to understand wisdome secretly.

He openeth also their ear.

The word which we translate, to open, properly signifieth to reveale; and, in Scripture phrase, the ear is said to be revealed, or uncovered, when a secret is brought to us, (& Sam. 20.2.) fonathan said to David, God forbid, thou shalt not die; behold my father will do nothing, either great or small, but that he will shew it me, (or uncover my ear) and why should my father hide this thing from me? Saul also used the same Hebraisme, or forme of speech, when he upbrayded his servants with their unfaithfulness to him; What, faith he, hath the son offesse such preferments for you? and are you all so corrupted in your loyalty to me, that all of you have confpired against me, and there is none that sheweth me, (or uncovereth my ear) that my son hath made a League with the son of fesse, (Sams. 22.8.) Will none of you ancover my ear? that is, discomentis. Seitum ver the plot that is contrived for my ruine? Then the ear is faid illud; Mens au- to be opened or uncovered, when any secret is made known to dit, mens vidit, the mind; as was further shewed at the 16th verse of the 33d Chapter, where Elibu used this expression; and therefore I shall

cætera surda et cæca sunt. Druf:

not return to that matter, but referre the Reader thither. Only consider to what, or for what, the Lord is said to open the ear. In the 33d Chapter Elihu told us, that when the eyes of men are thut (deep fleep being fallen upon them) he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction. Here Elihu saith, God having men under the rod, e openeth also their ear

To discipline.

The Hebrew word is of the same extraction in both places; - - -Instruction is for discipline, and discipline tends unto instruction. Ad cassigatio-It is often rendred, chastisement, and generally fignifies any seve- fingio fir pi rer course of instruction or education, whereby we are drawn of abje; frustry vel from evil and unto good. When Elihu laith, He openeth their ear ut ista disciplito discipline, we may understand it two wayes.

First, To fit them for instruction, and counsel; they heard ne emendentur. (possibly) before, but not with an open, that is, a ready and obedient ear. The ear is shur, though we hear much, unless we submit and conforme to what we hear. The ear feldome opens fully till the Lord imites, as well as speaks, and gives us both a word

and a blow.

Secondly, He openeth their ear to discipline, that is, to hearken what Gods chastening or correction speakes, or what he speaks by his chastning. The Lord would not have his chastnings unprofitable, nor his rods without fruit to us, and therefore he openeth the ear to discipline, and sheweth us the meaning of such a cross or fickness, of such a loss or affliction; He openeth their ear to difcipline.

Hence note:

First, It is a special power of God which helps us to understand his mind, either in his Word or in his Works.

We neither understand the dealings nor sayings of God, if lest to our selves: the heart of man is shur, his ear is deaf, the ear of his heart (that's the ear here intended) till God say (as in the Gospel to the bodily ear) Ephatha, Be thou opened, (Pro. 20.12.) The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord is the maker of them both : That's a great truth ; First, of the sensitive ear and eye; 'tis the Lord who hath made the one to hear, and the other to fee, as he told Mofes (Exod. 4.11.) and as 'tisfaid, (Pfal. 94. 19.)

Secondly,

Secondly, 'tis as true if understood of the intellectual eye and ear; the hearing ear and seeing eye, that is, the ear that heareth obediently and practically, that ear is of Gods forming and making; fuch an ear did God create (Alts 16. 14.) where it is faid, A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple of the City of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us, whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the things that were spoken by Paul.

Further, what was the season of opening the ear? It was a day of affliction, when they were bound in fetters, and holden in cords

of affliction.

Hence learn: God useth afflictions as medicines or means to restore spiritual hearing.

Man is often cured of his spiritual deasness, both as to the voyce of the word and worker of God, by fickness. A good man Res prospera in health, peace, & prosperity, may have his ears so stopped that the domin eft dei Lord sees it needful to send some sharp correction to get out the consolantis, res ear-wax and unlock them. Prosperity (saith one of the Ancients) odversa est do- is the gift of God comforting us; adversity is the gift of God admonenth; quodi- nishing us; why then doft thou complain that thou safferest, thy sufgiturpateri, un. fering is a medicament, not a punishment; 'tis for thy bettering, not de plangh; me- for thy undoing. 'Iis a favour to feel God striking, when we have dicins oft, non not heard him speaking, and he therefore strikes that we may at-pena; caltigatio tend what he speaks; When words do not prevaile to open the ear, fetters and cords shall. That's the second designe of God when he brings the righteous into streights, Then he openeth their ear to discipline: The third is given in the close of this verse;

And commandeth that they return from iniquity.

Here's the issue of the former two: The shewing them their bona eterna transgressions, the opening their ear, are that they may return pene trabant, from iniquity; and here is a command that they must; And comnon invitant. mandeth that they return, &c. The Hebrew text may be ren-Greg: 1. 26. dred, He speaketh, or saith, that they return from iniquity; and Moral. c. 26: this speaking may be expounded two wayes; First, by persmading; et di- He speaks perswadingly. The Lords afflictions are perswasions, his ftroaks are entreaties; he beseecheth us by our forrows, and sicknesses, and weaknesses, and pains, that we would return from

non damnatio. August: in Pfal: 102. Qui jubentis rerba non audiunt, ferienti werberibus admonentur;ut ad

our iniquity. Secondly, we take speaking or saying in the highest Araine, He speaks by commanding, he speaks authorizatively: Thus we render, He commandeth. The command of God is twofold; First, formal or express, when God gives the rule in so many words. Secondly, vertual. The command of God (I conceive) is here to be understood in this latter sense. When the Lord afflicteth the righteous, he vertually commands, or fends out his Edict, that they return from their inighty. The word return, implies them formerly following some iniquity, & gone far from the Lord: This returning is repenting all the Scripture over. I need fay no more of that. As by fin we turn from God, so by repentance, we return from iniquity; and as the Lord at all times commands the righteous by his word, so they even force him sometimes to command them by his rod, which is called discipline in the former part of the verse, because sinners feel paine, and find matter to learn, all at once. He commandeth that they return

from iniquity.

The word rendred iniquity, signifies a vain, empty thing, a thing IR habet so of nought: so the Chaldee paraphraseth it here, He commands that inficationem they return from their evil works, which are like to vanity, and a mibiliathing of nought. What is sin, but a kind of nothing? we look for has suit main, great matters from sin, but it is a vanity, it is (like an Idol) nothing que similiating the world, that is, it is not such a thing as it doth import, or as sunt vanitating to promise the opinion of men make it to be; Iniquity is so mibile no such thing as it pretendeth, or as is pretended. The Lord Chalde commandeth that they return from iniquity; that is, from doing that which will profit them nothing at all, or no more than a vaine thing, a thing of nothing can. And yet though iniquity be nothing good or profitable, yet its all things evil and hurtfull, nor had any thing ever hurt us or been evil to us, had it not been for iniquity. He commandeth that they return from iniquity.

Hence Note; First, Affliction hath a voyce; God speaks loudly to us by affliction;

He speaks to us as loud in his works, as he doth in his word; he trumpets to us, he thunders to us in his works: God speaks aloud, but sweetly, to us in his works of mercy, he speaks aloud, but terribly, to us in his works of judgement.

Hh

Secondly,

Secondly, Seeing, as was touched in opening the words, this command is not to be taken for a standing Law, for so God alwayes commands men to return from iniquity, but the command here is a renewed act or a special dispensation, there is, as it were. a fresh command issued, when a man is under the afflicting hand of God.

Hence Note: God reinfereeth or reneweth his command to return from fin as often as he reneweth our afflictions.

That we return from iniquity, is a standing, an everlasting Law, but when we are in affliction, then there is, as it were, a fresh Edition of the command, 'tis, as I may fay, new printed and proclaimed, the fetters print this command upon our heels, and the cords upon our hands, that we return from iniquity,

Thirdly, Note: Iniquity is a vaine thing, it is a nothing.

Shall we not then return from it? one would think a little perfwasion might serve the turn to hasten our return from a nothing, and shall not a command do it? when I say a nothing, remember, (as was thewed) fin is no fuch thing as you look upon it to be: where are the profits that you have reaped by fin? where are the contents and pleasures that you have taken by fin? the profit, the pleasure, and content of sin are nothing, there is no advantage to be had by fin. Sin is something in the ill effects of it; if you would have paine, and dishonour, and reproach, you may have enough of it in fin, and you will find fin a something in that sense; but fin is a nothing, that is, no fuch thing as you expect and look for, and therefore be perswaded to return from it.

Lastly, From the whole text take notice of the purpose of God, what he hath in his heart, when he afflicteth his people, the nighteous, for their iniquities and faylings, for their faults and uneven walkings. The scope of God in all this, is not their burt, but good; it is not to destroy them for their fin, but to destroy their an; it is not to withdraw himself from them, but to draw them mearer to himself; all the hurt that the Lord intends us by any affliction, is but to get out our drofs, and to fetch out our falth, co bring us off from those things that will undo and ruine us for

ever. And how great an argument of the goodness of God is it, that he defigneth the evils which we fuffer in these dying bodies. to heal the evils, and help on the good of our immortal fouls! that's all the hurt that the Lord means us. And the Lords heart is so much in this design (the return of those he afflicts from their iniquity) that he seems confident of it, that when any are in af-Aiction, furely they will return, (Hofea 5. 15.) In their affliction they will feek me early, furely they will. And therefore the Prophet speaks of the Lord as defeated and disappointed of his purpose, when he seeth such as he hath afflicted continuing in their sin, (Isa. 9.13.) The people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of Hosts: As if he had said, 'Tis a wonder, that being smitten they have not returned; what a strange, what a cross-grain'd people are these! What? doth the Lord smite you that you should run farther from him, and follow your iniquity closer, or hold it faster? you may be assamed that you turn not unto him that speaks to you; but when you are smitten will you not return from iniquity? remember, the Lord therefore suffers you to be bound in fetters, that you may be loosed from your fins; he therefore fuffers you to be holden in the cords of affliction, that you might let go your transgressions. Take heed you be not found disappointing him of his purpose. How well it will be with those who do not disappoint him, and how ill 'tis like to be with fuch as do, will appear further and fully in the two next verses.

Hh 2

T O B.

J O B, Chap. 36. Verf. 11, 12.

tt. If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their dayes in prosperity, and their years in pleasures.

12. But if they obey not, they shall perish by the

sword, and they shall die without knowledge.

N the former Context we heard, what the bleffed designes of God are upon the righteous, when they are bound in setters, and holden in the cords of affliction, namely, to convince them of their sin, to fit them for the receiving of Instruction, and to bring them clear off from iniquity.

In these two verses Elihaproceedeth to shew what the issue of

those afflictions will be, in a double respect or case.

Pirst, In case the afflicted come up to and answer the forementioned designes of God; that is, if they take knowledge of their sin, if their ears be opened to Instruction, if they return from iniquity; what then? he tells us (v. 11.) If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their dayes in prosperity, and their years in pleasures; that shall be the issue, the blessed issue of all the afflictions

with which they were exercised.

Secondly, He shews us how those affictions will issue in case the afflicted come not up to those designes of God, in case they are not brought to a knowledge of sin, not receive instruction, not return from iniquity; what then the tells us that (v. 12.) if they obey not (this will be the consequent of their obstinacy) they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge. We have a parallel Scripture to this almost in terms, (Isa. 19.20.) If ye hear and obey, ye shall eat the good of the Land, but if ye resuse and rebell, ye shall be devoured with the sword. This text not only carties the sense, but almost the words, by which Elihu expresset both the Lords pleasure and displeasure in this place to Job.

Vers. 11. If they obey, or hear,

That is, take out the lesson taught them; if they do that which the affliction teacheth them, or which God teacheth by their affliction,

fliction, by their cords and fetters, then, &c. The same word is frequently in Scripture used for obeying and hearing, (Pfal.81.8, 11, 13. Pfal. 95.7.) To what purpose is our hearing the will of God without obedience to it? When young Samuel said at the Lord's call, Speak, for thy servant heareth, (I Sam. 3.10.) his meaning was, Lord, I am ready to do what thou speakest. We hear no more than we obey, and therefore obeying and hearing may well be express by the same word. The text is plain, I shall only give this Note, and pass on;

It is our duty to hear and obey when-ever God calls or speakes, either in his word or in his works.

That which this text holds out specially is the voice of God in his works, what God speakes by Fetters, what he speakes by Cords. If ever we hear and obey the voice of the Lord, it should be when he teacheth us (as Gideon taught the men of Succoth, Judg. 8.16.) with thornes and briars of the wilderness. O let us take care of hearing and obeying this voice. For First, God is the Lord, and therefore to be obeyed. Secondly, God is a Soveraign Lord, and therefore much more to be obeyed. Thirdly, As all the Commands, so all the Chastisements of God are just and righteous, therefore they are most of all to be obeyed. Fourthly, To obey the Commands of God, whether taught us in his Word or by his Rod, is good, yea best for us, therefore we should obey for our own good. If they obey

And serve him, or worship him.

The word which here we render to serve, is very often in Scri-Religio at nupture rendred to worship, and sometimes worshipping is expound-minicultus ested by serving, (Mat. 4. 10.) Thou shalt worship the Lord thy servitus que-God, and him onely shalt thou serve; that also is the mind of the dam.

Text, If they obey and serve him.

Hence note; The Lord expects our service, and then especially, when we suffer.

Religion and the Worship of God, in the whole compass of it, is nothing else but service, a blessed service, a free service, a service infinitely more free than any thing the world calls freedom.

(Exact.)

(Exod. 4. 23.) Lebmy Son go that he may serve me, that is, wor-(bip me. All the Sons of God are his Servants, and they have most of the Son in them who have most of the Servant in them. If any eny han fervice they deny their fonship, or tather (as the Apofile speaks of Non-sufferers in one kind or other, Heb. 12. 8.) They are bastards, not sons; yea, God expects whole and all service from us, or that we should serve him with our all, (Deut. 10.12.) Thou shalt serve the Lord thy God with all thy heard. We must terve the Lord, not only wish the best we have, but with all the best, with the heart, and all the heart. We serve God no surther than we obey him, and we worthip him no further than we ferve

him, and that heartily.

To serve God, (as to love God) is a very comprehensive word, 'tis the summe of all the duty of Man. To serve God is to submit both to what he commands us, and to what he layeth upon us. To serve God is to submit to what he would have us do, and to whatsoever he is pleased to do with us; and fo we serve him particularly under sufferings: We should alwayes serve him actively, and we are called sometimes to serve him passively. All Believers are free, and yet they must serve; and they are made free on purpose to serve: We are purchased by the blood of Christ, that we might serve him. Because we are bought with a price, we must not be the servants of men, saith the Apostle, (1 Cor. 7. 23.) Whose servants then? Surely the servants of God. We are conquered that we might serve. The Latines say, that a Servant is one that is faved in War, taken and faved. So it is with all the people of God, they are taken in the holy war, they are taken prisoners, and so made servants to Jesus Christ, Yet Believers are fervants, not only by conquest, but compact and covenant; every godly man hath, as it were, fealed Indentures with God, he hath (upon the matter) put his ear to the Lords post to be boared thorow, (as you read, Exod. 21.6.) that he may be his servant for ever. The Lord expects service.

Serves tanguam in bello fervatus.

But what is it to serve him?

First, To serve him is to do his Will.

Secondly, To ferve him is to do his whole Will. It is not the doing of this or that piece of the Will of God, or this or that parch of the Will of God, which renders us his fervants; but the doing his whole Will: ThirdThirdly, To ferve him is to do his Will only; so saith the Scripture, Him only shalt thou serve. If it may be supposed, that we could do the whole Will of God, and yet do the will of any other, or do our own will too, in any thing contrary to his, we were not his servants; if we serve him not alone, or if we serve him not only, that is, if in serving man we aim not chiefly at the serving of him, or if all our services to men are not subservient, or not in subordination to the service of God, we serve him not at all.

Fourthly, I may add this also, To serve God is to do every thing under this contemplation, that, what we do is the Will of God. 'Tis very possible for a man to do that which is the Will of God, and yet not to serve him in doing it; which we never do till we do it because it is the Will of God. His Will must be not only the Rule of what we do, but the very Reason why we do it, else our doings are not his servings. They that do not attend this, serve God but as a beast may serve him, a beast may do that which is the Will of God; the inanimate creatures ferve him so : We hear of formy winds and tempests fulfilling his will. (Psal. 143.) All living, yea, liveless creatures do that which is his Will, but they do not attend this, that it is his Will which they do. So that, I say, to do his Will, not considering that it is his Will, is to serve him no otherwise than beafts, or than the winds or flormes serve him: And to do his Will, ayming at our own wills or ends, is to serve him but as a hypocrite ferves him. A hypocrite doth not serve God in what he doth, though he doth many things which are materially the Will of God, because in all he minds his own will more than the Will of God.

Lastly, We must serve God as Sons, (Mal. 3.17.) A Son serveth no less than a Servant, yea much more, though not as a servant; for he knoweth more of his Pathers mind than a meer servant doth Joh. 15.15.) and he knoweth, that he shall have also, though not Wages at the end of every day, yet the inheritance in the end. Obadiah was the proper name of one good man, and it is a name common to all good men; they are (as that word imports) Servants of the Lord. It is a common Theam to urge men to serve God, but it is a rare thing to be indeed a servant of God. To serve God is the Summe and Marrow of all knowledge

in divinity, and the great end why we came into this World and for which we are here detained.) Nor is it an easie matter to come up to, or attain the holy skill of serving such a Lord and Mafter as he: There must be a doing of his Will, and of his whole Will, and of his Will only, and that under this precise contemplation, that it is his Will, to denominate us his servants, or to

make a proof that we ferve him.

Now whether God teacheth us by his Word, or by his Rod (which is the teaching of this context) O how readily should we obey and serve him! To serve him is not only the design of our being made free, that is, we were not onely made free to serve him, but to ferve him is our freedom (as was touch't before) yea, to serve him is not onely to be free, but to serve him is to reign and rule. They that ferve God to purpose reign over the lusts of the evil World without, and over their own lusts within; nor can any reign over the lusts of the world without, or their own within, but only they who serve him, and only so far as they serve him. Every gracious act of service to God is the subjugation on or bringing under of some lust or other in man.

Now if any should say, surely this is a very sad Life, to be al-

wayes ferving, or to lead only the life of a fervant,

I answer, To serve God, or the service of God is sweet, pleafant and easie in a twofold respect. First, comparatively, to the service of sin and the world, of suff and the devil; that's a weariness indeed as well as a baseness. Secondly, It is easie also if we consider the help we have in it. The people of God serve him in a Covenant of Grace, which, as it calls them to work, so it gives them help to work. The New Covenant doth not call us as Pharaoh did the children of Israel) to make brick and deny us fraw; yea, under that Covenant, we have not onely fraw afforded us to make our brick, but we have ftrength afforded us to make our brick; that is, the very power by which we ferve our Master is given in by our Master. The Masters of this world fet us a work, but they give us no strength, but what work soever God sets his Covenant-servants about, he gives them Arength to do it. Then, O how fweet is it to ferve him, and how readily should our hearts come off in his service! Let me add one thing more (which brings us to the next words) ferwe him, for his is not a lean service, not an unprofitable service, there is a reward

reward promised to those who serve him; yea, his very service is reward, his work is wages. Therefore what calls foever we have from him let us answer and serve him. There are two things which should be the daily meditation of Saints, or they should be continually acquainting themselves with them. First, The Croj brist, that they may know how, and be willing to suffer for him Secondly, The Yoak of Christ, that they may know how, and be willing to ferve him. If they obey and serve him, What then? even that which was the last consideration provoking us to his service, there is a rewardin't, If they obey and serve him,

They shall stend their dayes in prosperity and their years in pleasures.

Here's good wages; who would not serve that Master who will pay him for his work in that defireable coyne, Pleasure and Properity) They shall spend their dayes in prosperity, that is, they shall run out their dayes in prosperity, their dayes and their prosperity shall be like two parallel lines, one as long as the other. The word which we translate to spend, signifies to finish, and that in a double respect; First, in a way of Consumption; Secondly, in a way of Perfection or Consumnation. That which is confignificate etiam sumed is finished, or ended. So the word is used (Pfal. 90.7.) consumi deside-(Numb. 16. 45.) The Lord faith to Moles, Go you up from this vio, quod dici-Congregation, that I may consume them in a moment; I will dispatch tur aliquem them and make an end of them presently. The Lord can soon rid his hand of finners. And as it notes a confuming by fuddain judgements, by diseases or age, so by longing or desire, (2 Sam. 23. 15.) And David longed ('tis this word, he was even spent and consumed with a longing defire) and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate. Now as that which is confumed or spent, so that which is perfected is finished. Thus, Moses having set down the particulars of the whole work of Creation summes all up in this word, (Gen. 2. 1, 2.) Thus the heavens and the Earth were finished, and all the host of them; that is, God compleated or brought that great work of Creation to its utmost perfection, he put (as we may speak) his last hand to it, there was nothing more to be added. Here in the text we are to take this word spend, not only as it often fignifies, to spend in a way of Consumption, but also to spend in a way of

Perfection, they shall perfect, not barely wear out their dayes. A godly man hath not so much consumed as perfected the dayes of his life, when he is come to and hath ended the last day of his life. They shall spend their dayes

In bono, 1. c.
in omni jucunditote.

In prosperity, or in good (saith the Original)

Prosperity is a good thing, a good bleffing of God. They shall spend their dayes in good, we translate it in the 21 Chapter v. 15. in wealth. Wealth also is a good bleffing of God to those that are good, and prosperity takes that in; prosperity is a large word comprehending all good, health and wealth, honour and peace: what-ever we can imagine to render our lives comfortable comes under the name of Prosperity, They shall spend their dayes in prosperity, or in good; this reward they shall have from the Lord who serve him. Is not this good wages? The carnal rich man pleased himself and said, (Luke 12.19.) Soul, take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up for many yeares. The godly do not please themselves, that they have goods laid up for many years in their own Stock, in their Lands, in their Houses, in their Purses, in their Shops, but they please themselves that they have good laid up for many years, yea, for eternity, in the Promises of God. They who serve him, they shall spend their dayes in good, they shall have good for every day, and so finish their dayes with good; yet this is not all, They shall pend their dayes in prosperity,

And their years in Pleasures.

In the former words he promised dayes of Good, here years of Pleasure; as if he had said, they shall enjoy their prosperity song, they shall not only have Dayes but Years filled up with it. One year containes many dayes, how many dayes of pleasure are there in years of pleasure! Our life is measured by days to shew the shortness of it; the longest measure of it is by years; They shall spend their years

In jucundu.

In jucundu.

DYI

Affere jucundiacrem, delectisionem, pulahritudinem,

In Pleasures, or (as we may read it) in sweetnesses, in pleasing fantnesses, in delicionsnesses, in beauties.

The word is used (2 Sam. 1. 23.) to shew the seveliness of Jonathan and Saul, they were a pleasant pair, a couple of goodly persons. They skall spend their dayes in pleasantness, or in pleasures. Further,

Further, Take notice, the word is plural; he doth not say, they reinobugratif. shall spend their dayes in pleasure, but in pleasures, implying all sime. In Can-forts and varieties of pleasure; in Sungs, saith one; in Marriage lien Targ. in Songs, saith a second; in graceful Beauties, saith a third; and, Munch ever which may be all or any of these, in delights, saith a fourth.

But here are two Questions that I must give answer to, for the Sept. in dele-

clearing of this Scripture.

First, The Question may be, Is this a mercy much to be reckon. Pagn. ed upon, to spend our years in pleasure? saich not the Apostle (I Tim. 5. 6.) The widow that lives in pleasure is dead while she lives? If it be a dead life to live in pleasure, how then is it here promised as a favour, as a mercy, to them that obey and serve

God, that they shall spend their years in pleasures?

I answer by distinguishing of pleasure; pleasures are of two forts. First, lawful and honest delights; of such we read (Gen. 49. 20.) where dying Facob bleffing of After faith, He shall yield Dabit delicion royal dainties, or pleasures for a King; meaning, he shall give, not regis. Hebr: only honest, but honourable pleasures and contentments, such as Mont: befit Kings. Secondly, There are unlawful and dishonest pleasures, which the Apostle calleth (Heb. 11. 25.) the pleasures of fin for a season. A wo will be their portion who live in such pleafures. Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl (faith the Aposse James, Chap. 5. 1.) why so? among other Reasons this is given for one (verf. 5.) Ye have lived in pleasure, wantonizing, and gluttonizing, and Epicurizing: in such base pleasures you have lived, therefore wo to you. To live in finful or unlawful pleafures is death and misery, or a life worse than death; but to live a life of lawful and honest pleasure is a mercy, the mercy here promised, and the very life of our lives.

Secondly, We may diffinguish of pleasures thus; they are either, first, Corporal pleasures, pleasures of the body, of which we read (Fob 21. 25.) One dyeth in his full strength, and another dyeth in the bitterness of his Soul, and never eateth in pleasure: that is, he hath had no contentment in the body, or no bodily contentment, but was alwayes fickly, crazy, pining, languishing, and ill at ease, his life was tedious, even a burden to him, for he could never eat in pleasure, scarce rast what he did eat. Secondly, There are Spiritual pleasures (Pfal. 36.8.) They skall drink of the Rivers of thy pleasures. David speaks there of Saints, what enjoy-

Ii 2

ments

ना वृद्ध में श्वाद, Erationibus.

mems and Joyes they have in the Church of Houle of God, attending upon him in holy Ordinances. Thirdly, There are eternal pleasures (Pfal. 16.11.) In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore. Such are all the joyes of Heaven, or of a glorified state. Now when Elihu saith, they shall spend their years in pleasures, we are not to take it meerly for honest corporal pleasures, for such a life, at best, is but the life of a Beast; but we are to take these corporal pleasures, either as heightned by better, that is, as spiritualiz'd by the tente of the love of God, and mixed with spiritual pleasures; or, for those purely spiritual pleasures which the soul finds in communion with God alone (having nothing to do, or no intercourse with creatures) drinking at the River of his pleasures in Prayer, in Hearing, in Meditation, in breaking Bread, in Singing. Now to spend our dayes, either in thele purely spiritual pleatures, taking in also those corporal pleasures so qualified as before, and duly circumstantiated, is a high, a very high bletting and mercy indeed. So. then, here is nothing to feed the fancy of Epicures, here is no promise of sensual, though of sensitive pleasures, these only are pleasures fit for the Servants of God, these pleasures only become Saints; as for those other pleasures, Christ saith of them in the Parable of the Sower (Lake 8.14.) They choak the Word of God; and God will not feed his people with fuch pleasures, as a reward of ferving him, as shall choak the Word, and unfit them for his fervice. No, we are to watch against, and deny our selves such pleasures, as our Lord Jesus caution'd his Disciples (Luke 21. 34.) Take heed, least at any time your hearts be over-charged with surfetting, drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. As if he had faid, Take heed of carnal pleasures, as much as of worldly cares, for as they are alike defiructive to the present purity of the Soul, so they alike endanger our future peace, and lay us open to the surprize of Judgment. And as such pleasures ruine the state of the soul, so of the body too, with which they have nearest cognation. Hence that of Sohmon (Prov. 21. 17) He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man. There, pleasure is opposed to work or labour : He that is all for taking his pleasure, and will not follow his Calling, this man comes quickly to poverty, and will dye a Beggar. Suppose the pleasure be lawful, yet if he loves pleasure, and is at his pleafure when he should be at his labour, he will soon be reduced to a morsel of bread, and become a poor man: But he that loveth unlawful pleasures, shall not only be a poor man, but will prove a wicked man. Thou that art given to pleasures (Isa. 47.8.) is the Character of Babylon. God gives good men pleasure, but 'tis the mark of an evil man to be given to pleasure. They that love pleasure, are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God (2 Tim. 3.4.) and such must needs be the worst of men.

And therefore we are not to understand this Text of any sinful pleasure, nor of a life meerly lead in lawful pleasure, that a man should be all upon his pleasure, and lay aside his Calling; Eliku doth not oppose pleasure to work, labour or business, but to trouble, sorrow, and assistance. They that obey and serve the Lord shall spend their years in pleasures, in honest pleasures, that is, they shall live, not only contentedly, but joysully. The Lord alloweth us to take any honest pleasure while we live, but not to live in pleasure; he alloweth us to take our delights, but our delights must not take us.

There is yet another Query, for it may be said, Is this a truth, that they who obey and serve the Lord shall spend their dayes in prosperity, and their years in pleasures? I answer to that,

First, If we take it absolutely and universally, we cannot affirme that every one who serveth and obeyeth God, shall alwayes have pleasure, that is, outward comforts and contentments in this world; many of the Lords faithfull fervants have lived in paine and forrow; so that if (as David spake in this case, Pfal. 73. 5.) we should speak thus, we should offend against the generation of his fervants. Some flourish in grace, who wither in worldly comforts. There is no certain connexion between these two, Grace and outward peace or pleasure; the providences of God vary in this poynt as himself pleaseth. Neither is it true, that the true fervants of God do uninterruptedly or alwayes enjoy inward pleasures, comforts and contentments; for he that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voyce of his servants, may walk in darkness, and trouble of spirit, and see no light, (Isa. 50. 10.) We are therefore to understand this Scripture as others of like nature, of that which is commonly done, or of that which we may upon good ground expect from God, and in faith wait for, that if we ferve and obey him, he will make our lives comfortable to us. I an-Secondly, fwer,

Secondly, This promile, or promiles of a like nature were fitted to the time wherein Elihu spake; he spake of the times long before Christs appearing in the slesh, when the Lord did, as it were, lead on his people very much by promises, of temporal and outward prosperity, of which the Scripture is more sparing in the new Testament, where we are come to the fulness of Christ, and the riches of the grace of God to us in him; of which there is but little (comparatively) spoken in the old Testament : And therefore under that darker dispensation of spirituals, the Lord saw it good to encourage that people to obedience by a multitude of very parricular outward promises, as we may read (Deut. 28.) He would bless their basket and their store, the fruit of the field, &c. These promises were sured to the state of that under-age people, who were led on and enticed by visible and sensible blesfings, as we do children with toyes and Gaudees; and indeed all visible enjoyments are but such in comparison of spirituals. Believers under the Gospel being come to a higher state, to suller attainments, the promises made to them run not much in that channel; yet it cannot be denied, that the Gospel also holds out promises for remporals, as well as the Law; and this latter dispenfation of the Covenant as well as the former, hath provided sufficiently for our outward comforts.

Thirdly, For answer, let us consider the drift of the Spirit of God in this promise of pleasure. Job had often complained of his own forrowfull condition, and concluded himself a man of forrow for all the remainder of his dayes : though his faith was strong for the resurrection of his body after death, yet he had little, if any faith at all, that he should be raised out of that miserable estate wherein he was in this life. He also had spoken somewhat rashly and amils concerning the dealings of God with his servants in general, as if nothing but trouble and forrow, did attend them, and that the wicked went away with all the sweet and good of this world. Now Elibu to take him off from these sad, and almost defpairing thoughts, as to the return of his own comforts, and to re-Etifie his judgement in the general poynt, as to the dealings of God with others; he affureth Job, that if righteous men being bound in letters, &c. hear and obey, God will break those bonds, and cut the cords of their affliction, and they shall spend (the remainder of) their dayes in prosperity, and (the sest of) their years in pleasures,

pleasures. So that Elihu in holding out this promise to Job, would rather clear his judgement from an error concerning the lastingness or continuance of his pains and forrows, than heat his affections in the expectation of joyes and pleasures in this world.

Fourthly, I answer, Though the people of God have not alwayes dayes of such outward prosperity, nor years of such sensitive pleasures, yet they have that which is better, and if they have no pleasures, they do not want them. The Apostle could say (Phil. 4. 11.) I have learned in what state seever I am, therewith to be content. What is pleasure if content be not ? We may have outward pleasures, yet no content, but he that hath content within, cannot miss of pleasure. A man may have riches, but no contentment, but he that hath contentment is very rich, (1 Tim.6. 6.) Godliness with contentment is great gaine, and great gaine is prosperity: this great gaine, this heart-pleasure, or soul-rest, contentment, is the affured portion of those who obey and serve the Lord, what-ever their outward portion be in this world. And he may be faid to spend his dayes in good, and his years in pleasure, who hath these pure gaines of gracious contentment, resting the foul in God in all conditions. The life of man (that is, the comfort of his life) dorn not confift in the abundance of that which he possesseth, (Luke 12. 15.) or in sense-pleasures; but in that sweet composure and sedareness of his foul, resting by faith in the promises of God, or rather in the God of the promises, and fo fucking sweetness from them.

Lastly, As though a servant of God should be exercised with sorrows all the dayes of his life, yet he cannot be said to spend his dayes in sorrow, because he meets with many refreshing intervalls and shines of savour from the sace of God in the midst of those clouds; so he may be said to spend his dayes in pleasure, because at least, when his dayes here are spent, he consummates his dayes (which is one signification of the word) by an entrance in-

to everlasting pleasures.

Chap. 36.

So much for the answer of these questions, concerning this promise, They shall spend their dayes in prosperity, and their years in pleasure. From the promise it self, Note;

First, Obedience to God is profitable to man.

God hath no profit by our Obedience, but we have. God doth

not call us to serve him in his work, as we call servants to do our work, to get his living by us, or better himself; no, the Lord calls us to ferve him and obey him, for our own good. They confult their own good best, who do most good. I may say these three things of those who do good (and what is serving God, but doing of good? or what is doing good but ferving God?) First, they shall receive true good; Secondly, they shall for ever hold the best good, the chief good, they shall not only spend their dayes and years in good, but when their dayes and years are spent, they shall have good, and a greater good than any they had, in spending the dayes and years of this life; they shall have good in death, they shall come to a suller enjoyment of God, the chief Good, when they have left and let fall the possession of all earthly goods. Thirdly, they that do good shall find all things working together for their good; if they have a loss, they shall receive good by it; if they bear a Ctofs, that shall bear good. Outward troubles cannot disturb, much less possure our spiritual good; for, All things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose (Rom. 8. 28.) Surely then the service of God is a gainful service, a profitable service; though the work may be hard, and the way painful, yet the wages will be sweet, and the end pleasant. The contemplation of this put David upon putting that question (Pfal. 34. 12, 13.) What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many dayes, that he may see good (that is, that he may enjoy good) keep thy tongue from evil, and thy mouth, that it speak no guile; depart from evil, and do good. The Pialmist makes Proclamation, What man is he that would have good? let him do good, let him obey and serve God, and he shall have good.

Again, Consider the Promise in relation to the Persons described, vers. 8, 9, 10. They were bound in Fetters, and holden in Cords of affliction: Now saith Elihu here, they shall spend their

dayes in prosperity, and their years in pleasures.

Hence Note; There is no condition so low and forlorn, but the Lord is able to bring us out of it, and into the enjoyments of fullest com-

forts:

He can change our Iron Fetters, and Cords, into Rings of Gold,

Gold, and Bracelets; he can translate our dayes of trouble, and our years of pain, into dayes of prosperity, and years of pleasure; it was so with Job in the issue, and he was the man that Elihu here intended. Feb was long bound in fetters, and holden in the cords of affliction, yet as Eliha told him he should, so he did afterwards, spend his dayes in prosperity, and his years in pleasure; the Lord doubled his Cattel to him, his friends fil'd his Coffers, and his Cabinets, Every man gave him a peace of money, and every one an Ear-ring of Gold; his children also were the same for number, his daughters the fairest in the Land; himself also lived in the fulness of this outward Prosperity, till he was full of dayes, and he fed upon the delicious fruits of this Promise all his after-dayes. Manasseh having run a course of unparallel'd wickedness, was at last taken by the Captains of the host of the King of Affyria, among the Thorns, and they bound him with fetters, and carryed him to Babylon (2 Chron. 33. 11.) yet when in his affliction he befought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers, he was entreated of him, and brought again to Ferusalem, where he spent his dayes in prosperity, and his years in pleasure. If we turn to the Lord in affliction, the Lord is ready to turn away our affliction, or (as the Church prayed in the half turn of her affliction, Pfal. 126.4.) to turn our captivity, as the streams in the South; that is, to make both a most admirable and a most comfortable turn of our condition. Streams in the hot Southern Countries are rare; the Rain of those Lands usually is dust. Streams in the South are also very welcome : How glad are they of a cooling Showre from a Cloud, who daily feel, and are fainted with the scorching Beams of the Sun! Such a turn shall they have (saith Elihu) who being holden in the cords of affliction, tuen from iniquity, obey and ferve the Lo d.

Thirdly, From the matter of the Promise,

Note

A comfortable passage through this life, is a very great mercy, as well as the hope of happiness for ever in the other life.

Tis prosperity and pleasure in this world, though not meer worldly prosperity and pleasure, which is here ponised; and we are not to slight any thing that comes by promise, yea, we should highly esteem those things, which, considered in them
K k felves,

felves, are little worth, as they come to us through the Promife. We may quickly over-rate and over-reckon outward things in themselves, and we ever do so, if we rate or reckon them any better than vanity; but as they are promised and bestowed in a way of savour from God, and as they are a part of the purchase of Christ, and handed to us by him (so are even outward things to believers) thus they are very valuable. Upon these terms to live and spend our dayes in good, and our years in honest lawful pleasures, is a great mercy.

From the whole take two Corolaries.

First, How blasphemous then is their Opinion, who say it is a vain thing to serve the Lord, or that there is no profit in calling upon him!

which blasphemy was refuted Chap. 21. 14.

Secondly, Would we have a good end of, or out-gate from our afflictions, then let us hear and obey. Thus much of the first case, what the issue of their afflictions shall be, who obey: The Second issue upon the contrary case, followeth in the 12th verse.

Vers. 12. But if they obey not, they shall perish by the Sword, and dye without knowledge.

Here contraries are set one over against another, for their suller illustration. If they obey not; that is, if those righteous men spoken of before (vers. 7.) obey not. What it is not to obey, is clear by what I said was to obey, in opening the former verse. I shall only take notice, that in this latter part it is not said, If they obey not, and serve him not, but only, if they obey not; and I conceive, Elibu saith no more, or proceeds no surther, because they who deny obedience, will certainly deny service; therefore he stops at that.

If they obey not.

They who are good in their flate, may often fail in doing that which is good; for of those this Text yet speaks, and is generally interpreted. The Hypocrite in heart is spoken of in the next werse, but here Eliku is speaking of the righteous, and because he is so, therefore by this disobedience cannot be meant an obstinate rebellion, but a sloth or carelesness in attending to the Call of God, for the amendment of some evil in their lives. If they obey

Hence

Hence Note;

The calls and commands of God are not alwayes obeyed, no not by good men, not by the righteous.

The call and command of God is not at all obeyed by the wicked, and it is not alwayes obeyed by the righteous. The righteous sometimes hear the word, but do not answer it, and sometimes they feel the rod, and do not attend it; they cry out of the smart of the rod, and of the sores which the lashes of the rod have made upon them, they weep over, or because of their fores, yet they do not presently give glory to God by obeying him, and leaving their finnes, I mean as to that special point of duty in which God would have them obey him, and as to those special sins which God by that affiction calls upon them to leave. Many good men do not presently understand the purpose of God in this or that assistion; and while it is so with them, they must needs fail in answerableness to it. I know every godly man hath a general bent to obey God and serve him. It is not with the godly in their afflictions as with the wicked under theirs, of whom the Prophet speaks, (Isa. 9. 13.) They did not turn to him that smote them; yet even such Scriptures are in a degree applicable to many of the people of God, they do not alwayes turn to him that smiteth them; when they are exercised with variety of calamities, they mind not the Lord as they ought. And hence it is (I say) that though the righteous have a general bent to obedience, yet they sometimes come short of that obedience which a special affliction or correction calleth them to; yea, they may be so short in answering it, that the Lord may proceed to lay heavier and greater afflictions upon them, even to the taking of them out of the world, as it followeth in this verse, If they obey not

They shall perish by the sword.

Before they were bound in fetters and held in cords, but now ducentur ad octhe fword shall overtake them, and they shall perish or be taken a-cissonem gladis may by the sword: The Hebrew is, they shall pass away by the Aquin. Per sword, that is, they shall die. Man is said to pass away by the gladium transsword, when the sword doth not pass by him, but smites and kills gladio occidibling, which is a temporal perishing. It is said (Isa. 57. I.) ur, Druss.

The righteom perish, &c. As the righteous perish by a natural death, to they may perish by a violent death, and possibly that may fall upon them when they attend not the providential dispensations of God.

Proprie est missle, aut jaculum.

They shall perish by the sword, or by the drawn weapon. The word notes any weapon that is drawn or cast forth, hence some translate ic a Darr or Javeling, which is shot out of the hand; but it may also be applied to the Sword, which being drawn forth out of the fheath is often fent upon deadly messages, and may be numbered among missive weapons: Now when Elihu saith, they shall perish by the sword, we may take the word sword properly or tropically. Properly two wayes; First, for the sword of the Warrier; Secondly, for the sword of the Magistrate, either justly punishing or grievously afflicting. Some good men have acknowledged in great trials and sufferings, under the hand of map, that God hath. met with them for their neglect or non-attendance to more immediate afflictions under his own hand. Again, take the fword tropically or improperly, and so any sore affliction that greatly annoyeth, especially if to death, is called a sword in Scripture; They shall perish by the sword (under one notion or other) if they do not obey.

Hence learn;
God will not spare, no not his own People, if they do not obey him.

God is full of sparing-mercy, but the righteous may provoke him so, that he will not spare, no not them. Judgement begins often at the house of God (1 Pet. 4. 17.) And if Judgement begin at the house of God, what shall the end be of those that obey not the Gospel? This is a terrible word. The righteous may perish by the sword; how dreadfully then shall the unrighteous, the wicked, the scorners of godliness, perish! If God will make his own people smart in his anger, when they provoke him, how will he speak to his enemies in his wrath, and vex them in his fore displeasure (Psal. 2. 5.)

Secondly, From the gradation of their roubles; First, they were bound in fetters and holden in cords, but now here's a sword,

a devouring fword, a killing deadly weapon.

They who give not glory to God in leffer or in lighter afflictions draw greater upon themselves;

They may come from a cord to a sword, from being bound to be slain. God hath several sorts of Instruments to chasten his people with, and as the best of outward good things may be the portion of evil wicked men, so the worst of outward evils may be the portion of good men; they may at any time, and sometimes shall perish by the sword, and as it followes,

They shall die without knowledge.

The fword is death, a deadly fword; they fall die

Without knowledge, or, as the text may be read, because they mere without knowledge.

But is any righteous man without knowledge? That the foul be without knowledge is not good, (faith Solomon, Prov. 19. 2.) How then can be be good whose soul is without knowledge? And feeing we interpret this text of the righteous, how can it be said,

they die without knowledge?

I answer, Knowledge may be taken in a more general sense, and fo no righteous man either lives or dies without knowledge? he neither lives nor dies without the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ, whom to know is eternal life, (John 17.3.) and without the knowledge of whom, all (who are actually capable of fuch knowledge) must die eternally; he neither lives nor dies without the knowledge of himself as a sinner, and of Christ who saveth him from his fins. Such ignorances are inconfistent with the state of a godly man; he may do foolishly, but he is not a fool; he may be wanting in some kind of knowledge, but he doth not want knowledge; he cannot be without faving knowledge, though he may perish (temporally) without knowledge. The first thing that God makes in the new creation is light, the light of knowledge, there he begins his work; therefore we cannot take knowledge generally, simply and absolutely, in this text; but as knowledge Dei monita per may be taken restrictively, for knowledge in or about this or that cassing times circles in the control of the what which the Lord would acquaint the righteous with, and teach Druf.

them by their fetters and afflictions, which they do not learn; and therefore they die without knowledge, or, because they are without knowledge; yet that want of knowledge, together with all their other wants and ignorances, are pardoned to them.

Nonest oratio affirmativa stultitiæ vel negativa scipliciter negas. advertentiam. Bold.

Further we may expound the words thus; They shall die without knowledge, that is, without the knowledge or confideration of of that special affliction or judgement which is coming upon them; they shall die unawares, not thinking, nor so much as dreaming of such a judgement, or that such a hand of God was so near them. According to this interpretation, Eliha intends either entiae, sad sim- their inadvertency of that approaching scourge or calamity with which they are overtaken, or their not understanding the reason of it. Christ saith in the Gospel (Luke 12. 46.) The master of that servant (the evil servant) shall some in a day which he knowes not of, and in a time when he looked not for him. Now, as the last Judgement, the great Judgement shall come upon the wicked in a time when they look not for it, so the Lord may bring a special particular judgement upon some one or more of his own people, when they do not think of it, or never suspected that they should fall under it. Good men are sometimes surprized; and so, they shall die without knowledge, is no more than this, they shall be taken unawares by a suddain unexpected judgement. Though every godly man hath a preparation for the general judgement, yet as to a particular one, he may be much unprepared.

Lastly, Some expound the words of more than inadvertency, or bare nescience, even of folly, and some degree of affected ignorance, which possibly may prevaile upon a righteous man in some cases and for a time; but I rather adhere to the former interpretation, because (as was shewed before) the whole context seems to intend a more ordinary case of a righteous man. So then, this Scripture holds out the fad issues which the neglect of giving God the glosy of his corrections and chaftenings may bring upon the righteous.

Hence note: Disobediense, or neglect of duty, is dangerous, where soever it is

The Church of Cerinth felt this; many of them died (in the

fence given) without knowledge, or not having a due spiritual knowledge of Christ in the holy supper, which the Apostle calls, their not discerning the Lords body, (1 Cor. 11. 29.) and prefently tells them (ver. 30.) for this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep; that is, are taken away by death. Any kind or degree of sin is dangerous; not to obey a hint of providence, not to obey an intimation of the mind of God in an affliction, may be very dangerous; afflictions may end in destructions, and setters in death, if the purpose of God in them be not attended and answered by us.

Chap. 36.

Secondly note;
Not to obey when God calls and commands, is folly and ignorance.

Such do as if they had no knowledge at all what or how to do.

Lastly in that he faith, they shall dye without knowledge, we may learn this from it;

The ignorance and heedlesness of men undo them, and bring destruction upon them.

Many die because they have no knowledge, others not heeding or minding what they know. Holy David confessed that in one point he was ignorant and foolish, even as a beast, (Psal. 73. 22.) and when good men act like beafts, without a due improvement of reason and understanding, they may perish (as to this temporal life) like bealts, (Ifa. 5. 13.) Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge. The Prophet (I conceive) is to be understood (as this text) not that they had no knowledge at all, or were utterly ignorant, but they had no knowledge as to that special dispensation of God, how to make use of it or improve it, at least they took no heed, no care to use or improve it: and (saith he) they therefore are gone into captivity, they are brought under bondage to their enemies, they are scattered, ruin'd, and (as to this world) quite loft and undone. Wicked men are undone by acting against their knowledge; good men may be undone by acting below their knowledge, or by not acting according to what they know or should have known; and so (through their ignorance or heedlesness) they dye mithout knowledge.

I O B, Chap. 36. Verf. 13, 14.

13. But the hypocrites in heart beap up wrath, they cry not when he bindeth them.

14. They die in youth, and their life is among the

unclean.

E Libu having put the case of the righteous in these two condiional propositions last opened, as somewhat doubtful, what at least some of them may do, as to a right improvement of outward afflictions; he proceeds in these two verses to shew the case of the wicked wholly desperate, in their affliction. There is an if put upon the righteous, but he is conclusive upon the hypocrite; to be sure he will neither hear nor obey, neither submit nor conform

to the voyce of the rod.

So that in these words he sets forth the common year constant issue of the hand of God upon hypocrites in heart. Possibly good men, righteous men may not alwayes answer the expectation of God, when affliction is upon them; but as for hypocrites, they (alwayes) heap up wrath. And in this we may conceive Elihu hath a respect to Job; For though he did not conclude him to be an bypocrite in heart, yet he put it home upon him to consider the matter, whether he himself had not, at least, acted and carried it like an hypocrite in heart, under the afflicting hand of God, forasmuch as he was no more humbled and subdued under it. And indeed Eliha turns every stone, and tryeth every way, to bring down the spirit of 706. And therefore as he had shewed, what the usuall effects of the hand of God upon the righteous are, so he tells him how it is with the wicked in that case, thereby to put him upon the triall, whether he had not reason to suspect himself to be an hypocrite, because his carriage, was so like theirs.

Verf. 13. But the hypoerites in heart, &c.

חכפי לב

That adversative particle shews that he is dealing upon another subject: hyposrites in heart are far from righteousness. I have discoursed somewhat largely concerning the hypocrite in chap. 34 V.30. upon these words, That the hypocrite reign not, left the people

snared; Theretore I intend not here to revive that subject, but shall only a little open the additional tearm or amplification which is here put upon the hypocrite. Elihu doth not fay barely, hypocrites heap up wrath, but, The hypocrites in heart heap up wrath; as implying some special character and brand of hypocrific upon the persons here aimed at. An bypecrite in heart is no more but this, nor is it any thing less than an hearty hypocrite; he is one that is not to the halves, but wholly hypocritical; he that is but half with God (such is the hypocrite) is wholly profane, wholly wicked. The same word which signifyeth an hypocrite signifyeth a profane person, and so we put it in the margine of this text, The hypocrite, or the profane in heart. This expression is very paralel with that of the Apostle Paul (Col. I. 21.) Te that were sometimes a lienated and enemies in your mind, by wicked workes, yet now hath he reconciled. He doth not only call natural men enemies to God, as indeed they all are, (the wisdome of the flesh is enmity against God) But he calls them enemies in their minds, that is, such as have a mind to be enemies, or such as have a good will to do evil. So here, an hypocrite in heart is a man heartily hypocritical; who foever is an hypocrite is an hypocrite in heart; Hypocrifie is that which lyeth at the bottome, it is an heart-fin: though hypocifie act and vent it felf at the tongue, and by the hand, yet all hypocrifie lyeth at the heart; nevertheless, every hypocrite is not (strictly taken) an hypocrite in heart. The hypocrite in heart is opposed to the upright in heart, (Pfal. 92. 11.) The hypocrite in heart hath a heart as full of hypocrifie, as the upright in heart would have hearts full of uprightness. Yet further to characterize the hypocrite in heart,

Take these three considerations to clear it;

First, an hypocrite in heart is one who doth evil, not out of mil-pim eft. take, but out of designe; not because he cannot do otherwise, but because he will not, and is resolved on it; such a sinful piece or such a piece of finsulness is the hypecrite in heart; he fins as he should love and serve and obey God, with all his heart.

Secondly, as this hypocrite doth evil upon design, so also he doth good with a wicked mind. It is possible for a man to do good unfincerely, or not to be fincere in the doing of ir, and yet not to do it with a wicked mind and purpose, or with a base defign. There are many who do good, who come to dury, whether in family

family or congregation, who mind not what they do, nor have any love to it, or zeal for it; here is hypocritical attendance, in that they fet not themselves to meet with God or find God in the duty; yet possibly such come not with a wicked purpose, nor with a plot in their heads in doing these duties, that's proper to the hypocrite in heart. Thus we may understand that of Solomon, lately opened upon another occasion, (Prev. 21. 27.) The facrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; how much more when he bringethit with a wicked mind! A man may be wicked as to his state, yet not do a thing with a wicked mind, not bring a facrifice (which include th all holy services) with an unholy purpose: but the hypocrite in heart when-ever he doth any good, hath a plot in it; as he alwayes serves God with a reserve, he hath somewhat that he doth with-hold, he cometh by halves, so he alwayes serves God with a design. He may make a fair shew, and a great noise in profession, but ever he hath some end of his own in it. Jehn faid, Come see my zeal for God. He was about a good work, the destroying of Ababs House, and Baals Priests, this he called zeal for the Lord; but he did all this with a wicked mind; for the great thing upon his heart was to get into the Throne, to be a King, he made use of all those specious acts of zeal only as a flirrup to raise himself into the saddle, the matter he aimed at was to establish the kingdom of Israel to himself and his posterity. That's a second thing; as the hypocrite doth evil purposely, so when he doth good he hath a purpole, a plot in it, more than is, good; he doth it not, either for the honour of God, or for the enjoyment of God, which are the best ends of every good action, and without a pure eye, without which no action, how good foever in it felf, is good to, or turnes to the good of the

Thirdly, The hypocrite in heart, I conceive, is such a one as knows himself to be an hypocrite. There are many hypocrites, who little thinke that they are hypocrites, yea, they may think themselves very upright and honest in what they do; ignorant deluded souls, understand not their own case. Laodicea was wretched and miserable, these are false and hypocriticall, but know it not. As some judge, or rather mis-judge themselves hypocrites, who are upright in the maine with God, and honest at heart, I show frequent are such complaints, and self-wronging accusations?

Chap. 36.

ons?) So many are hypocrites, or rotten at heart, who know it not. The heart is deceitfull above all things, (faith the Prophet Fer. 17.9.) and desperately wicked, who can know it? And among all men, common hypocrites know least of their own hearts. But the hypocrites in heart know their hearts are rotten and falle, to what they professe. The politick hypocrite kno veth that all he Induum tallium doth is but in shew, and that he doth but act a part in Religion, as pieratis et coloa Player upon the Stage, when he is most religious; he doth but rest fantitain; take a colour, or die, or paynt himself with Religion, (which is the proprietas rafignification of the word here used in the Hebrew) but is not reduced 2117, set ligious, he doth but put a faire glotle, or disguise upon himself, insicere vem athat he may appear what he is not, or what he knows himself not liene colore, el to be; He knoweth in himself that he is naught, while he would lare alieno palbe known by and to others as good. The Apostle speaking of the lio. grievous sufferings of some primitive Christians, saith (Heb. 10. 34.) They took joyfully the spoyling of their goods, knowing in them-selves that they have a better and a more enduring substance; that is, they knew they were in a present gracious state, and that thete remained for them an eternal happy state. Thus also an hypocrite in heart, is one that knoweth in himself, or in his heart, that he doth but pretend to be good, and that whatsoever good he do th, it is only in pretence, and is therefore (as the Apostle speaks of the Heretick, Tit. 3. 11.) condemned of himself, while he acquits or commends himself never so well to others. Thus it appears how bad, how base the hypocrite in heart is in his best appearances, and how much he excels and bears away the Bel for baseness and badness, I may say, for madness too, from all common hypocrites. Now as they exceed in fin, so they shall in misery, the next words affure us of that; But the hypocrites in heart

heap up wrath.

Elihu having described the persons that he dealeth with, or about, he also sets forth both their wofull and sin ull condition: And he doth it three wayes:

First, By what they do; They heap up wrath, For a man to be labouring continually only to make heaps of wrath for himfelf, in

what a wofull condition is that man!

Secondly, He shews their bad, both sinfull and wofull condition, by what they will not do; that we have at the latter end of hald Lill 2 bayes or

the 13th verse, They cry not when he bindeth them. They heap up wrath, that they do: They cry not when he bindeth them : That

they do not.

Thirdly, He fets forth their wofull condition by that which is an inevitable confequent and fruit of fuch doing, and not doing, the evil which they juffer; that we have (v. 14.) They die in youth, and their life is among the unclean. These are the parts of the wofull condition of hypocrites in heart. I shall give a touch upon each of them.

ישימי אק Ponunt irem.

Fi. ft, Confider what they are doing : If you would know their trade, iisthis; They are heaping up wrath; they add wrath to wrath, till they make a mighty matte or heap of it. There is a difference among some interpreters what wrath is here intended.

They heap up wrath.

Aligui, ponunt cunt in deum. Merc:

First, Some conceive that Elihu meaneth their own wrath. iram, intelli- Hypocrites in heart heap up wrath, that is, when God doth at any gumt, execundes- time bind them in ferters, and holdeth them in the cords of affliction, as he spake in the former context, these hypocrites in hearr, what do they? Do they obey? Do they turn from iniquity? Do they amend their hearts or lives? No; They heap up wrath, they grow angry, they vex and rage instead of repenting; that's all these hypocrites do; when the Lord hath bound them in fetters, and holds them in the cords of affliction, they are all in a flame, they are mad with rage and fury. Some both of the Ancients and Moderns, infift upon this opinion, and it is a very great truth, that when the hypocrite in heart is under the hand of God, when God hath him fast in his fetters, his wrath doth boyl, his fury comes up in his face, as it is faid (Exek. 38. 18.) concerning the wrath of God towards his enemies: this fully answers that affertion of Eliphaz, (Job \$. 2.) Wrath killeth the foolish man. What wrath? his own wrath; he kills himself with vexing and fretting. The hypocrite in heart is a wrathfull man, when things go not right with him. Some have so expounded that (Eph. 2. 3.) Ye were by nature children of wrath even as others. Children of wrath, that is, wrathfull children; we are full-of wrath, full of anger by nature. Though I do not take that to be the sense of the Apostle; but that by children of wrath, he means all men as borne under the wrath of Cod, nor do I conceive this the proper meaning here, though not unusefull. They heap up wrath, that is, they grow angry, vexed, and troubled; But Secondly

Secondly, Rather the wrath heaped up, is the wrath of God, which is the most dreadfull thing in the world; and so these words may be expounded by those of the Apostle to an impenitent sinner (Rom. 2.4,5.) Despises thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance: But afterthy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. To heap up wrath, and, to treasure up wrath, are the same. The abusers of the patience and long-suffering of God, are treasuring up wrath against themselves from day to day; and so do the hypocrites in heart, They heap up wrath.

Hence Note, First,
The micked or hypocrites in heart, grow more wicked while the hand of God, his affilling hand, is upon them.

The more they are under the rod, the more they rebell. I ground it upon this; If they did not heap up fin, they should not heap up wrath; were they not more vile & wicked under their affliction, there would not be more anger against them. It was said of those that would have brought in the captives (which was a very oppressing purpose, (2Chro. 28.13.) ye shall not; for Whereas we have effended against the Lord already, ye intend to add more to our sins & to our trespasse. Then presently followeth, For our trespasse is great, and there is sierce wrath against Israel. As if it had been said, If ye do this thing ye will increase the wrath of God (which is very fierce already) and blow it up into a confuming flame. While men grow more and more wicked and vile, God groweth (as to the manifestations of wrath) more wrathfull. When we hear of the increase of wrath, we may be sure there hath been a proportionable increase of sin. It is said of Abaz, who was a hypocrite in heart, a very prophane person, (2 Chron. 28. 22.) that in the time of his diffresse he trespassed yet more against the Lord, and trespassing more against the Lord, he heaped up more of the Lords wrath against himself : For 'tis added, (v. 23.) He sacrificed to the gods of Damascus which smote him; he got nothing but blows, for his paines, or impicus piety in serving them: And he said, because the gods of the Kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me, But what got he by this enc:eale

crease of his sin? Surely nothing, but an encrease of wrath; sor, it followeth in the same verse, They were the ruine of him and of all Israel. God makes new rods, when men make new sins; and he multiplyeth swords, while men multiply transgressions. The more men draw iniquity with cords of vanity, the more they draw misery upon themselves, and are held the faster in the cords of affliction.

Secondly, When 'tis faid, The hypocrites in heart heap up wrath. We know hypocrites are cunning gamesters, they hope to sin so closely and artificially, that no hurt shall ever come to them

by it, yet The hypocrites in heart heap up wrath.

Hence Note; The wiles and policies of hypocrites will availe them nothing;

They shall not avoyd wrath, do what they can; the Lord will find them out. The Apostle laith (Gal. 6.7.) God is not mocked; for what seever a man soweth, that shall be also reap; for he that someth to his slesh, shall of the flesh neap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Let hypocrites in heart sow as cunningly as they can, though they seem to sow only good feed, yet they shall reap bad srnit, because they sowed with a bad heart. Hypocrites may deceive men, and heap up their favours to themselves, but they cannot deceive God, who knows their hearts, and will therefore consume them in his wrath, which they have heaped up to themselves.

Thirdly, Elibs puts it upon hypocrites in heart to be at this work of heaping up wrath. All impenitent finners do it, but he puts it upon them especially. All sinners, open professed sinners, that sin and hide it not, that throw up even the very name and profession of Religion, these all heap up wrath; yet they heap up most, and are here spoken of as the only heapers up of wrath, who

are hypocrites in heart.

Hence Note;
God is extreamly angry with hypocrites, or the wrath of God doth burn extreamly hot against hypocrites;

He heats the Furnace of his wrath seven times hotter for hypocrites in heart, than for ordinary sinners. The Lord (Isa. 10.5.) speaking of the Assyriansaith, The staff in their hand is mine indignation,

dignation : I will send hims against an hypocriticall Nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoyle, and to take the prey, and to tread them down, like the mire in the streets. The Lord put a staff in the hand of that great King of Astria, and he called it his indignation; it was the Lords indignation which was a staff in the Assyrians hand. But against whom will he fend it? That text answers against an hypocriticall Nation; Who are they? the people of his wrath. God hath wrath for all finners, but the generation of hypocrites are the people of his wrath beyond all other people. None abuse God like hypocrites: For, first, hypocrites carry it towards God, as if he were like the Idols of the Heathen, that have eyes, and fee not ears, and hear not, hands, and handle not; feet, and cannot walk: That is, they carry it towards God as if he were but an Idol, fatisfied with meer outward shews and services. An Idol finds no fault, nor troubles any for their hypocrific and false-heartedness: All that is required in the Idols service, is but outside and bodily exercise. Thus the hypocrites deal with God, as if he also would be satisfied and taken up with a little outside service; or as if sacrifice would please him, when his word is disobeyed. (1 Sam. 15.23.) Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and Sacrifices, as in obeying the voyce of the Lord? Saul had been very carefull to bring home facrifices; He had not obeyed the command of God, yet hoped to put him off with a facrifice. But what were heards and flocks of cattel to be facrificed, when Saul rebelled againft God? Nothing provokes God more than outward fervices of worship, when they are not accompanied with inward, and universal submission to his will; for that's no better a sacrifice, no purer worship, than a Heathen payes to his Idol-god. Hypocrines offer God only the blind, and the lame, (Mal. 1. 14.) that is, maymed and imperfect services: there is imperfection in the services of the best, but theirs are imperfect services, so imperfect, blind and lame, that they are fit only for the blind, and the lame; so Idol-gods are called, (2 Sam. 5.8.) And do not they heap the wrath of the true God, who serve him no better than false gods are ferved, by their Idolatrous Devotionists !

Secondly, There must needs be a continual heaping up of wrath by Hypocrites; for, if not to set the heart right provokes God to wrath, (Pfal. 78. 8.) The Lord was exceedingly dis-

pleased

pleased with the Israelites, because they set not their heart aright. Now if the Lord be to angry when the heart is not fet aright) much more must it provoke the Lord, when men do purposely see their hearts wrong, when they do evil knowingly, advisedly, when, as it were, they study to do evil. To do good only in shew, doth more displease the Lord, than the doing of that which in thew is evil, or which is evil above-board, known to be so by all beholders. As Hypocrites often deceive men, so they attempt to deceive God himself. This cannot but heap up wrath, being it felf so great a heap of sin. They who think God will be pleaf'd with outward Services alone, or have no care to give him inward, are alike displeasing to him. Therefore, among all forts of sinners, the Lord declares his wrath, and thunders we upon wee, in the Gospel, against Hypocrites: They have heaped up wrath, and it shall be heaped upon them, They shall have their Portion in the Lake that burneth with fire and brimftone. That's the first thing, what they do, They heap up wrath. When the hand of God is upon them, they are so far from coming forth humbly and penitentially to turn away his wrath, or to feek his face, that they provoke him more and more, and dreadfully enflame the reckoning against themselves; They beap up wrath.

Secondly, Elihutells us what the Hypocrites in heart do not; They cry not when he bindeth them. But is it a fault, or so great a fault, not to cry when God bindeth us? Are we commanded species are ge or bound to cry, when we are bound in setters, and holden in cords of affliction? wherein lyeth this fin? That will appear

while I shew what crying is here intended.

To cry, is, First, to complain and make a noyse; this is the proponat, veri- cry of impatience. Secondly, to mourn and be forrowful; this is the cry of Repentance. Thirdly, to pray, to supplicate, yea, eft Jobum di- to pray mightily, to pray strongly; and this is the cry of Faith. (Luke 18.7.) Shall not God avenge his own Elect, which cry day and night unto him? That is, which pray mightily to him night and day. The hypocrite in heart often makes the first cry when God bindeth him, the cry of impatience, but never the two latter; he makes not, either the cry of Repentance, or the cry of Faith in Prayer, when God bindeth him. This lets us fee the fecond Part of the wickedness of these hypocrites, its the emission of a most necessary duty, yea of two: They act very finfully, for

Licet hanc do-Arinam in communi Elihu fimile tomen

70' Vincire

pro castigare,

they heap up wrath; they act not holily, for they do not cry when God binds them; that is, they neither repent nor pray, or they repent not heartily, they pray not earnestly, in the day of their affliction.

Hence note, First; Hypocrites humble not themselves, when God hambleth them;

When he binds them as it were hand and foot, they are tonguetyed and heart-tyed. The Lord faid of fuch (Hof. 7. 14.) They cryed not unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds; they assemble themselves for Corn and Wine, and rebel against me. They howled and made a noyle, but (faith the Lord) all the while they cryed not to me. There was no Repensance, no Prayer in their cry, they cryed not with their heart. Hypocrites will, first, complain much when God binds them; secondly, they murmure much when God binds them; thirdly, they will vex themselves like a Bull in a Nett, when God binds them; Fourthly, they will rail and curse when God binds them: but repent, of pray they do not. (Ifa. 8. 21.) They shall pass through it hardly bested and hungry; and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their King and their God, and look upward. Here was blaspheming, but no crying, no repenting, no praying, no deprecating the hand of God, or the Judgment felt, in an humble and spiritual way. Hypocrites cry not to the Lord, though he makes them cry; they are readier to find fault with God, than with themselves, in the day of advertisy : they neither cry the cry of godly forrow for their fin, nor the cry of godly Prayers, for help out of their affliction. They who are falle with God in times of Peace, seldom, if at all, repent, or duly apply themselves to God for help in times of trouble; the reason is, Anteadle tur-The Conscience of the hypocrite in heart, tells him, he hath dealt his vite mebasely with God; and therefore, when he is in streights or bound, moria animum what face, what faith, what liberty of spirit, can be have to cry to energiat. God? Such hypocrites often cry our despairingly, but oh how rarely are they brought to cry, either believingly or repentingly, when God bindeth shem.

Secondly, Confider this cry a little further, as a Prayer-cry. Hypocrites in heart may be much for prayer in time of prosperity, they were not hypocrites else; if they did not pray, they were

openly prophane, not hypocrites. Christ speaking of hypocrites, (Math. 6.) rells us, they pray much, and (Math. 7.) they cry Lord, Lord. Hypocrites are much in praying, especially in times of prosperity, yet here he saith, They cry not when he bindeth them, that is, in the day of advertity.

Hence Observe; That which is not done aprightly, will not be done confrantly.

Hypocrites cry to God only in thew at best, and when 'tis best with them; but when they fall into a troubled condition, they cry not, they even lay down their thew; they throw up their duties, when they miss their defines. They who have prayed often in a time of prosperity, not throwing away their lins, coming into affliction they throw away their prayers. Prayer will for sake them, who for sake God while they pray. Such as want Faith, will not have a heart to pray in their wants. If holy Duties cause us not to leave our fins, sinning will at last cause us to throw off our holy Duties. Will, or doth, the hypocrite pray alwayes? was Jobs denying question, at the 27th Chapter of this Book. They who do not love prayer, cannot hold out in prayer: They who do not find a sweetness in drawing near to God in good Times, will foon withdraw from him in evil Times.

Thirdly, They cry not when he binds them.

Hypocrites, when they have most need of prayer, are least in the ne of it.

When more need of Prayer, than in time of affliction? yet the hypocrite bound in affliction is bound in spirit from supplica-

Fourthly, They are said not to cry, though (in some sense, as hath been shewed) they do cry when God bindeth them.

Hence Note: That holy Duty, which is not rightly and holily done, is reckened by God as not done at all.

What almost is more common among hypocrites, yea, among some prophane ones, than to pray, and defire others to pray for them in time of affliction? Pharaob will needs have Mofes pray

for him; and when Abab was threatned with a binding he humbled himself; yet this goes for nothing, and gets nothing, at most, but what Abab got a reprieve from some present or temporal punishment.

Fifthly, Those words are brought in as an aggravation of the finfulness of the hypocrite; he doth not ery when God binds him,

he prayeth not when God afflicts him.

Hence Note; It is an heightning of our sin, to neglect prayer in time of affistion.

It is a finto neglect prayer at any time, but their fin is exceeding finful, who neglect it then, who cry not to God, when God binds them. Is it not extreamly evil, that they should not pray at all, or but little, when they should be all and alwayes in prayer & Affliction doth, as it were, naturally draw us, yea, forcibly drive us to God. In their affliction they will feek me early (Hol. 5.14.) As if the Lord had said, If ever they will feek me, surely they will seek me then, and then they will seek me early, that is, earnessly, and with all their hearts. Therefore how unnaturally sinfull are they, who in their affliction will not seek God! The Prophet saith (Isa. 26.16.) Lord, in treable have they visited thee, they powred out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them: Yet the hypocrite will not pray when chastened. How sinful it is, not to pray when God binds us, appears upon many accounts.

First, To neglect prayer in time of affliction, is very sinful, be-

cause then we have most occasion for it.

Secondly, In time of affliction God especially calls us to prayer; he commands us at all times, but chiefly then. Is any among you afflicted? (is that any mans case?) let him pray (Jam. 5.14.) What should an afflicted man do esse? What is he so much engaged to do by his own necessity, what so much by the will of God, as to pray? Affliction, which takes us off from many other works, sets us upon and about this.

Thirdly, Prayer in time of affliction is under most promises to be heard: Now not to pray, not to cry to God, when we have so many promises to assure us of hearing, encreaseth our sin in the neglect of prayer. Though I do not say, the hypocrites prayer is under these promises of hearing, yet it shall be reckoned as a

M m 2

fin that he ha h not prayed in affliction, because there are so many promises of hearing prayer in affliction. The Lord is very gracious to those that cry in affliction, and the hypocrite hath often beard that he will be so; how wretchedly sin ul-is he then against God, as well as regardless of his own good, if God hear not of him, or from him, in his affliction! (Pfal. 102. 17.) He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer, that is, g-actionfly accept and answer it. Again (Pfal. 69. 33.) The Lord heareth the poor, and despiseth not his Prisoners; that is, any who are bound in affliction: For I suppose that Text is not to be restrained to those only, who are shut up in prisons, but takes in all those that are bound in any trouble. In which sense the word is used (Lam. 3. 34.) The Lord doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men, to crush under his feet all the Prisoners of the earth: The Hebrew is, All the bound of the earth; by whom, he means, as chiefly the Jewes gone into Captivity, who were more properly bound, so any decained under any calamity whatsoever; to all, or any of them, that Scripture is applyable, The Lord doth not willingly affi Et. Seeing then there are so many promises made to those that cry in affliction, this will be urged upon the hypocrite as an heightning of his naglect, that he hath not cryed when God bound him. Thus we see the second part of these hypocrites misery, by what they do not, They cry not when he bindeth them.

The third thing by which the woful mifery of hypocrites

in heart is set forth, is by what they suffer.

Vers. 14. They dye in youth, and their life is among the unclean.

They dye in Youth.

The Hebrew is, their Soul dyeth. The Soul, strictly taken, is immortal, and dyeth not; yet 'tis often said in Scripture, the Soul dyeth; the Soul being taken, either, First, for the Life; or, Secondly, for the Person. To say, their Soul dyeth in youth, is no more than to say (as we translate) they dye in youth. The word rendred Youth, fignifies in the Root of it, to shake and tron-In tempestate: ble, or to make some great concussion; hence some render the Wels. Inen- Text, They dye in a Tempest, or in a Storm. One of the Jewish auffine : Rab. Doctors gives it thus, They shall dye with a ftroak or shaking ; that

is, they shall perish by the force and violence of that affliction, Sal. q.d. Ex-

which hath arrested and taken hold of them.

But I conceive our reading is clear, They dye in Youth, because affishionum in Youth is the most stirring time of our life, or that time of life, peribunt. wherein we use the most violent motions without, and are subject to the most violent passions within; therefore the Hebrew expresseth both by one word. Now when we say, They dye in Youth, the meaning is, they dye in the prime, in the best, in the most flourishing time of their life, in the spring of their dayes.

But is it true, that all hypocrites in heart dye in youth? Do not many, who discover themselves to be but hypocrices, dye in old

I answer, Such-like Scriptures do not intend an universality, as to every individual; but only shew that 'cis so for the most part, or often fo. Hypocrites in heart, men of prophane spirits, usually dye in their youth, and are cur off in the Flower of their Age. They who multiply their fins, substract from their dayes; and they have least ground of hope to live long, who live ill. As bloody, so deceitful men (such are hypocrites in heart) shall not live out half their dayes. They who live not out half their dayes, dye in youth. That also is the meaning of Eliphaz (Chap. 15. 3 2.) where he faith, The wicked man shall have his recomperce before his time; as also when he saith (Chap. 22. 16.) They were cut down out of time; that is, before the ordinary time of cutting man down by Death was come. And therefore, I anfwer,

Secondly, they die in youth, needs not be taken in that firichness, as importing that they die before they come to mens estate, but only that they die before the common time of dying. To die in youth fignifieth any immature death; or when death cometh suddainly upon any, they may be said to die in youth. Thushere; they die in youth, that is, some immature or suddain death overtakes them, they come to an hasty or untimely end, they prolong

not their dayes on earth.

Thirdly, this dying in youth may refer to the hypocrites unpreparedness or unfitness to die. Unprepared persons may be faid to die in youth, because youths or younger men are usually unprepared to die. Hence that serious memente or warning given them (Eccles. 12. 1.) Remember now thy Creator in the dayes

cullione et vi quibus suns

of thy youth. Young men are commonly so unprepared to die. that who loever die unprepared, may be faid to die in youth; yea, though they die in old age, they die infants. I may fay ac least in alusion to that of the Prophet (possibly it may be a proof of what I say) Isa. 65, 20.) An old man that hath not filled his dayes (by being good and doing good) dieth a child. As a child may be said to die an hundred years old, when he dies full of grace, so a man of an hundred years old, may be said to die a child, an infant, when he hath no grace; for though he hath been long in the world, yet he can hardly be faid to have lived at all. So then, how long soever the hypocrite in heart hath had a being on the earth, and a breathing in the air, he alwayes dieth in youth, or before his time, because he hath not yet learned the way to

There is yet another reading of the words; we fay, they die in youth, that faith, they die with youth, or young men; that is, as difsolute, deboyst, vitious and riotous young men die, so hypocrites Eque morien- die. The hypocrite is opposed to the outwardly profane in his life, but he shall be like him in his death: As if Eliku had said, look as vain voluptuous youths, carnal youths, or young men, who give tur atque juve- themselves up to their pleasures, look as or how they die, look niles illi animi what wrath is upon them when they die, even so shall the hypocrites in heart die, they die with the youth. I shall touch this obnituntar Deo, further upon the last clause, where Elihu gives us this sence in oomnefligitium ther words, and in words that more fully reach this sence; for having said, they die in (or with) youth, he thus concludes,

And their life is among the unclean.

Here it may be queried; forasmuch as he said before, they die in youth, how doth he here say, Their life is among the unclean? what life have they when dead? I answer, By their life, we may vitavivere & understand that life which hypocrites in heart shall have after death; which may be taken two wayes. First, for the life of cum homo vi- the foul, while the body remaines a confuming or confumed nam cum morte carkass in the grave, that life (after death) the life of their soules is among the unclean. Secondly, for the life which they shall have after the refurrection of their bodies, that will be among (Supplea) au- the unclean too. Some translate the words thus, Their life is taken away among the unclean; we say, their life is among the un-

Moritur cum Juventa. Jun. eternal life. Ponitur 1 proDy ut cap. 9. 26. Pial. 143. 7. Pisc. tur O pari judicio Dei conterenqui proterve projetti sunt. Jun.

Ot bic vita mori dicitur, fic Authores Latini dicunt vitam vivere; Drus. Vita eorum

clean. The word (is) is not in the original text, and we may Cum meritomake the supply by a word signifying to take away; Their life, riis. Pisc. Latini vacant is taken away among the unclean, that is, they shall die like the cinados of paworst of sinners, they shall make no better an end, than the un-thicos qui in clean and profane, no better than the most foul and filthy Sodom- concubits libi-

ites, as the original imports. For

The word which we render unclean, hath a double, yea, a lieru funguncontrary fignification, holy and unholy, clean and unclean. They who are holy onely in name, are most unboly in heart and life. The Duo contraria
Scripture often by the same word expressent things of utmost opposition; so here he calleth those who are most unholy, by a word fignificat fanwhich fignifieth holiness; the Hebrew saith, their life is among num pollutum, the Sodomites. Mr. Broughton translates, and their life with forni- scortatorem. cators. Sodomites, who are the most unclean and filthy sinners, Reste simulaworse than fornicators, are expressed by a word, by this word natio comparat, which also fignifieth boly, or holy ones (Deut. 23. 17.) There quia ex pravishall not be a Sodomite, or, an holy one among you; and therefore tate animiconas we read of Sodomites in the land, who are finners against the tingit, quod ho the law of nature, (I Kings 14. 24.) (a according to that law mines fint finus of Moses, we read, I Kings 15. 12. and Chapter 22. 46. as al- nim proprium to 2 Kings 23. 7. of the deltroying of the houses of the Sodom- magnanimi esta ires, and of the removing of Sodomites out of the land. Sodom- manifestum. ites being the most abominable of all unclean ones, how unclean Aquin. are they whose life is among them, or whose life is taken away wi h them! The Spirit of God doth rightly compare hypocrites to Sodomites and filthy persons, because it proceeds from the hear of some base lust or other that any are hypocrites. Tis proper to those who are magnanimous, or of noble spirits, to be open, clear-hearted and ingenious.

Their life is with the unclean.

Hypocrites have a great affectation to be numbered among the clean and holy, and possibly they have been, or may be, high in the opinion of men, for holiness, for very Sain's; But their life shall be among the Sodomites, or the unclean. It being a shame to express the abomination of that fort of sinners by a word proper to them, the Scripture (by an Euphemisme) calls them holy; we translate the Scripture sense, and call them unholy or unclean ; Their life is among the unclean, among Sodimites. Thus as the death

dinoso vice mu-

death of the hypocrite here is fully expressed in the former words, He shall die with the youth, that is, like those sinful Sodomitish youths, like those youths who live in the heat of abominable lusts, though he seemed to have an heat of holiness; so their life hereafter is fully expressed in these latter words, Their life is with the unclean. This clearly sets forth hypocrites, they are spiritual adulterers, they pretend love to Christ as their husband, but their hearts go a whoring after the world. And therefore as their life was really in this world, though they pretended otherwise, so it shall be visible in the world to come, among the unclean.

Hence Note

First, They who are like the unclean in this life, shall be wrapped up with them in the next life after death, or in the second death.

They who live like the wicked shall dy like the wicked, and live with them, if theirs may be called a life, for evermore. The hypocrite, with all his varnish and fair colours, shall not die like a godly man, nor live with him after death; though he hath lived the life of a godly man, as to appearance, yet he shal not die so, nor live so when the dead rise: he shaldie and live like and among his own company, the unclean. He was fecretly unclean in his life, and he shall openly live among the unclean, when he dyes. Balaam a Sorcerer, a Wirch, a false Propher, how did he beg, that he might die the death of the righteens, and that his last end might be like his! (Num. 23.14.) The hypocrite would fain die like those whom he hath imitated and made a shew of all the dayes of his life; But did Balaam dy like the righteous?no, he dyed, as he lived, like one that had loved the wages of unrighteousness. Though hypocrites have lived in reputation with godly and good men, yea, have been reputed godly and good men, yet when they die they shal go down among the unclean, even among the debauched and filthy Sodomites, they shal go to their own place and to their own company. It is said of Judas when he hanged himself (Alts. 1.25) He went to his own place, his proper place. All things naturally tend to that which is congeniall or like to them; heavy things downward, light things upward. What place is congenial to, what place is the center of wicked men? Surely Hell, the bottomless pit is their own place, and that's the meaning of the text there. Tudas was a great while among the Apostles in an high place, in a very excellent place

the sir sinon

place, he went like an Apostle, or for an Apostle; but that was not his owne place; he was an hypocrite, and when he dyed then he went to his owne place, to that place which was proper to him. In this life good and bad are mingled together in the tame place; the hypocrites and the fincere may be in one House, in one Congregation, in one Church, in the purest Church on earth there may be hypocrites in heart as well as fincere; but when hypocrites die they shall be divided from all those with whom they were never truly, or in heart, united. If it were possible, all the godly or fincere should be in one place as to spirituals here (that's most comely and defirable, though not attainable) yet we cannot make the feparation perfect in this life; but at death it will be done perfectly; death will not leave one hypocrite among the fincere, not a weed among the herbs, nor a chaff in the floor; death will make perfect separation; after death all the holy shall be gathered together into one fociety, and all the unholy into another fociety by themselves. It is said of Abraham he was gathered to his people (Gen. 25. 8.) Not only to his kindred, in the flesh, but to all those that were of his faith. Death will gather all to their proper place and company. Godly Fosiah was gathered to his fathers (2 Chron. 34. 28.) and the wicked are said (Pfal 49.19.) to go to the generation of their fathers, where they shall never see light. Death will send every one to his owne. The hypocrite shall no more shuffle himfelf among the righteous, nor Satan himself, nor any of his Sons, among the Sons of God; every man shall be for ever among his like.

Further note;

The smoothest-faced and elosest hypocrite in the world shall fare as bad or no better then the soulest and deboystest sinner:

They shall die with the vile, and be taken away among the unclean. The fairest hypocrite, shall have no more esteem with God, then the soulest Sodomite that ever was in the world. Christ saith, if any refuse to receive the Gospel, it shall be worse with them then with Sodom, the cry of whose sins went up to heaven; nor shall it be any white better, but rather worse, with them who receive the Gospel of Christ only in shew, their hearts not being right with him. How wosul is their present condition, who daily heap up wrath, who (in the sense opened) die in or with youth, and whoselife (after death) is among the unclean!

J O B, Chap. 36. Verf. 15, 16, 17.

15. He delivereth the poor in his affliction, and

ofeneth their ear in oppression.

16. Even so would be have removed thee out of the strait into a broad place, where there is no straitness, and that which should be set on thy table, should be full of fatness.

17. But thou hast fulfilled the judgement of the wicked: judgement and justice take hold on thee.

Lihu having shewed how terrible God will be, how dreadfully he will deal with subtile hypocrites; The hypocrites in heart heap up wrath; proceeds in this context to do two things further.

First, that he might raise some hope in Job, if he did at last humble himself, he repeats the gracious dealings of God with humble and upright-hearted ones at the 15th verse; I say he repeats it, because he had spoken of it before (vers. 6, 7.) and this is a very useful and profitable repetition, by which Job is doubly admonished to raise himself from his despair of a better condition; forasmuch as God doth not afflict with a purpose to destroy, but that he may heal and help the afflicted. The greatest design of God in chattening us should be alwayes remembred, that he intends only our good, especially to make us thereby better or more partakers of his holines.

Secondly, he makes application of the whole doctrine to Job; and that two wayes; First, by way of consolation, assuring him he had been delivered in case he had humbled himself duly & deeply before the Lord (v.16.) Even so would be have removed thee ont of the strait into a large place, & Secondly, he applies it by way of conviction, that as yet surely he was unhumbled, because still under the afflicting hand of God, vers. 17. But thou hast fulfilled the judgement of the wicked, judgement and justice take hold on thee. So much concerning the state of these verses in ge-

neral; I shall now go on to open them in order.

Tracert, extra-

wit, detrovit,

Verse 15. He delivereth the poor in his affliction, or he pulls the poor out of affliction;

That is the sense of the word, and the work of God. We find in pier extrance the word used to fignishe the pulling or drawing off of the shoo, ex erunn , mi-(Deut. 25. 19.) As the shoo is tied or buckled to the foot, feria, ericulo. and must be loosed before it can with any ease be drawn off; so Chalatz and affl ctions are tyed to us, till the Lord unlooteth and draweth lachar two them off from us, or us from them. To draw out of trouble, or contraries, save to draw us out of trouble, is deliverance. David expresses him-aresweetly self by that word (Psal. 6. 4.) Return, O Lord, deliver (or used y Elihu draw) my foul (that is me) out of the enemies hand, or out of inthis verse. the trouble which compasseth me abour, and is ready, like deep Brough. waters, to swallow me up. He delivereth

The poor in his affliction.

Who are meant by the poor, hath been shewed before, I shall not stay upon it here, only consider, there are poor as to their outward state, and poor as to their inward state, that is, first, poor in Spirit, which is a bleffed poverty; and secondly, poor in spirituals, which is a miserable poverty. The two former forts of poor especially, when joyned in one, are here intended; He delivereth the

in his affliction, or, in his poverty.

There is a great elegancy in the Hebrew text; is a word of the gata, pauperum same root which signifieth the poor who are delivered, and the a paupertate, affliction in which or out of which he or they are delivered. We miserum a mimay translate the text thus; he delivereth the poor in his poverty; foria. Pined. that is, when he is in his poverty or affliction, the Lord delivereth him out of his poverty, or affliction; if poverty be his affliction, or what soever affliction comes under the name of poverty, the Lord delivereth him out of it. I have upon other passages of this per 12 de, ex. book spoken of this deliverance, yet shall touch it here again, because we ought always to remember ir; we are often in affliction, often in trouble, and therefore we have need often to be put in mind, and continually to bear in mind, that God is a deliverer, the deliverer of his people from, or out of afflictions; He delivereth the poor in his affliction.

עני בעניו

Hence

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Hence Note; Deliverance is the work of God.

As the poor cannot deliver themselves in affliction, so neither can the rich deliver the poor by his riches, nor the ffrong by his power. nor the wife man by his wildom, craft or pollicy. The Lord often useth the help of man, creature help, in delivering the poor out of afflictions; yet the whole effect is here, and every where in Scripture attributed to God, He delivereth the poor. Deliverance of any fort is of God, yet more especially some fort of deliverances are; as Nebuchadnezzar confessed (Dan. 3.29.) who, when those three Worthies were delivered out of the fiery furnace, made a decree, that every People, Nation and Language which spake any thing amiss, against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, should be cut in pieces, &c. and he did it upon this ground, because (faith he) there is no other God that can deliver after this fort. He had an opinion that his god could deliver, but he appropriated the glory of that deliverance to their God; there is no god can deliver after this fort; no god but the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego can check and stop the rage of fire, and bring out those unburnt, who are cast into the burning. That's the first thing, Deliverance is of the Lord.

Secondly, He delivereth the poor.

Note; The lowest and meanest are the objects of deliverance.

When it's worst with us, then usually God cometh in. He will be seen in the Mount, and provide at a pinch; he loves to do for us when we can do nothing for our selves. Take the poor in any notion, but especially for such as being destitute of all help and means of deliverance, are also poor in spirit, not trusting to any help or humane arm, these, these are the persons whom the Lord delights to deliver; and therefore God is so often spoken of in Scripture, as espousing the cause and quartel of the Widow and the Fatherless.

Thirdly, From the manner of expression, He delivereth the poor in affection,

They who are not delivered from affliction, may yet be delivered in affliction.

God doth not alwayes deliver his People from affliction (either not fuffering affliction to fall upon them, or presently bringing them out of affliction) but he is engaged (by promise) to deliver them in affliction; and this he doth sometimes by checking the affliction, that it shall not hurt them; sometimes by enabling them to bear, yea, to conquer the affliction, how much soever it hurts them. He delivered those in the third of Daniel, in the fiery surnace, by checking the fire that it should not hurt them; and Daniel in the Lions den, by checking the hungry Lyons that they did not devourhim. He delivered Job, and David, and Jeremie, and the Apostles, and all the Martyrs, who loved not their lives to the death for the testimony of Jesus, by causing them to glory in, and triumph over all their tribulations. He delivereth the poor in hu affection,

and openeth their ears in oppression.

What's meant by opening the ear, was shewed at the 10th verse of this Chapter, and at the 16th verse of the thirty third; Yet

confider somewhat in the words anew.

Chap. 36.

And openeth their ear. The Hebrew copulative particle, which we render, and, is often in that language used to denote a season, or special time, and then it is rendred by when; thus here he delivereth the poor in affliction, when he hath opened their ears, by or in oppression. Thus also (Plal. 139. 16.) Thine eyes did lee my substance, yet being imperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. The Hebrewis, and not one in them; as if he had faid, God had a full Idea or platform of Davids body before it was framed; fo here, he delivereth the poor in affliction, and openeth, or when he hath opened their ears in oppression; that is, taught them effectually to make a good use of their afflictions. We may also render it, after ; so the copulative (Van) is expounded (Lev. Paciet eum in-17.15. Fer. 10.13.) Thus here; He delivereth the poor in affli- telligere quod on after he bath opened their ears; that is, after he hath made propercatis them understand that sin hath caused their sufferings, and hath al- punitur. Aquin

so made them obedient and ready to receive counsel from him, as that phrase of opening the ear hath been opened. He openeth, or when or after he hath opened their ears

a radico
SIN?
cosrelavit,
preflit, conpreflit, vim intulit præpofito,
in sæpe valet,
per.

in oppression, or by oppression,

The word notes, extream oppression; we read it (Num. 22. 25.) in the story of Balaam, where 'tis said, his Asse c whed (or pressed, or oppressed) his soot against the wall, while he was going to curse the people of Israel, that so Balak might oppresse them. This word is used also Judg. 4. 3. 1 Sam. 10. 18. and by it Elisha shewed how he would have Jehorams messenger handled (2 Kings 6. 32.) Oppression takes sast hold. The Lord takes sast hold of sinners by oppression, and will not let them go till he hath opened their ears; but as soon as he hath opened their ears in or by their oppressions, then (out of hand) he delivereth them in, is not out of their afflictions. From the connection of this with the sormer part of the verse,

Observe;
The evil of oppression or trouble is preparator; to, or a usual meanes to sit us for our receiving of good.

He delivereth them in affliction, when he hath opened their ears in or by oppression. When once the soul by hearing the cry of the oppressor is made obedient to the call of God, then God comes and workes deliverance. Good men, while free from evil, are oftentimes like the wilde als described in the 39th chapter of this book, fuch as will not hear nor regard the crying of the driver, though he be not an exactor, (as the word there fignifies and we put in the Margine) but a fair and gentle driver. Few hear when spoken to, till they feel as well as hear; and therefore the Lord first sends them in o trouble, that they may hear, and having by that meanes opened their eares to hear, he brings them out of trouble. When we are truly humbled by affliction, we are near deliverance from affliction. The plaister must be kept on till the wound be healed. The Lord will not leave off scourging or correcting his people till he hath brought them to such a posture, that they are fit for mercy. The Lord helps and heals those who submit; and if they whom he hath bound with the cords of affliction, call humbly for release and relief, he will not forsake them, but restore them in due time to their former felicity; He delivereth the poor in affliction, when he hath opened their eares in or by oppression.

Elihu having laid down this general Doctrine, makes Applica-

tion of it in the two verses following;

Vers. 16. Even so would be have removed thee out of the strait into a broad place.

Thus Elihu proceeds from the general Thesis or assertion of Gods deliverance, to the Hypothesis, accommodating the Dottrine to John Case and Person, Even so he would have remo-

ved thee, &c.

This 16th verse contains the first part of the Application made to Job, where Elibu informs him what the issue would undoubtedly have been, if he had submitted (which he did not) as he ought, to the afflicting hand of God, and had not (which he did and ought not) filled his mouth and the eare of God with bitter complaints, nor stood so stiffly upon his own defence and vindication. This Elibu doth by a double allusion.

First, to the bringing of a man out of close prison into a state of freedom, or into an open air. This he gives us in the former part of the verse, even so would be have removed thee out of the

Brait into a broad place.

Secondly, he doth it by alluding to the furnishing of a mans table with store, not only of who some but of delicious meates, who before fared very hardly. This he doth in the close of the verse, and that which should be set on thy table, should be fall of fatness. As if he had said, if thou had st harkened to the voyce of God, thou should st have had both liberty, and plenty, had st thou been bettered by thy troubles, it had been better for thee, and much better with thee; then had st been enlarged fully, thou had st been supplied abundantly with all manner of good things desirable, even to the utmost of thy desires: that's the general scope of this verse; more particularly.

Even so would he have removed thee out of a strait into a broad place. Some read the verse with a retro-respect, or as looking back to the time past; as if Elihu had bid Job remember his former experiences, whether God heretofore dealt not bountifully with him. To this sense (besides others) Mr. Broughton translates, which

Sicetiam arerterat te ab ore angu-Stiæ in latitudinem, cui non fuberat preffumum erat pinguedine. Jun.

hath turned thee from diffreffes mouth, to largeness, where is no straitness, and that which was laid upon thy table was full of fatness: and he gives the gloss upon his own translation thus; God once made thee wealthy, and would again; thou hast had experience how good a master, and how liberal the Lord is to those that serve him, ra to forculum thou thy self didst enjoy prosperity a long time farre from all mensatue ple- trouble, or touch of assistion. Thus, (I say) some refer the words to the time past; but I rather keep to our own translation, which expresses the original text, as an assurance of what Feb should have had, and might have expected in time, had he complied as he ought, with the purpose of God in his afflictions.

Even so would be have removed thee out of a strait into a broad place. As if he had said, God who useth and loveth to deliver the poer out of affliction, would also have delivered thee out of thy affliction est proprie in kad'st thou been humbled under thy affliction, had'st thou fallen down before him, hadft then submitted the matter to him, and not disputed it with him as thou half done had st thou confessed his justice, and not accused it or complained about it, even so would be have removed thee, &c. The word which we translate to remove, fignifieth

הסא citare, fere ad malum, a radice סות

Ex sadem ra-Miones & interpretationes pullularant. Pined.

To move or to perswade; because he that perswades another, moveth or removeth him from his opinion or intendment, dice varia le- or from what his practife was before, and brings him to be or do somwhat that he did not, or was not, before. To be perswaded is to be inwardly moved, to be moved in mind: And therefore they who perswade or entice others to evil, are said to turn them from the Lord, and to thrust them out of the way which the Lord commandeth them to walk in (Deut. 13.5.) To perswade in any degree, is to move (fosh. 15.18.) and some perswade so strongly, that they make in others great removes.

Further, It fignifies to deceive, as will appear if you compare Text and Margin; 2 Kings 18. 32. and those Texts, 2 Chron. 32. 11, 15. all concerning one matter. He that is deceived, is usually deceived by perswasion, and is drawn away by some en-

ticements.

Now, because he that perswadeth or deceiveth another, endeavoureth to turn or remove him from what he holdeth or intendeth, to the contrary, therefore (as we render) this word figurfies also to remove, to bring from one place to another, or from

one state to another. He would have removed, or translated thee

Out of a freight into a broad place.

Here are two forts of places, a streight, and a broad place: What a ftreight place, properly taken, is, all know. The Hebrew is, He would have removed thee out of the mouth of the streight. The angustis Septuagint render, He would have removed thee out of the month of et adversarius. the enemy. An enemy puts us to streights; and therefore the Hine Septuasame word signifies a streight and an enemy : he would have remo- ginta reddunt, ved thee out of a streight place; the hand of an enemy is so. But in securios more generally, by the freight place, we are to understand any "X". kind of tribulation or trouble whatfoever. Troubles of any fort are justly called streights, for they inclose and imprison us, they abridge us of our liberty, they ty us short up, where we can scarce Hir or breath. A man in trouble, is a man in streights. Some expound these words allegorically, taking the mouth of the streight for Hells mouth; they that descend thither, are indeed in everlasting streights; for, though Tophet be deep and large, as the Prophet speaks (Isa. 30. 33.) yet all that are there, are in streights. Hell is large to take in, but streight to let out, so Gehenna off Areight, that it will not let one out for ever. Others expound it ampla ad resitropologically, or with respect to manners; he would have deli-Piendum, et anvered thee out of the mouth of the freight, that is, from the power tendum. of thy fins and corruptions, for they indeed are streights; and De puteo pecthough we easily fall into them, yet we hardly get our, or free of cati et prave them again. But we need not take up, either Allegories, or consuetudinis, Tropologies; the words are plain. That which Elihu here in- curu ingressus tends by streights, is great trouble, deep misery, into which a sicilis enius man being cast, knows neither how to subsist, nor how to escape ! Pra-angustm.

Yet out of that streight place he promiseth deliverance; He would Gregor. have removed thee out of a streight

Into a broad place;

That is, to liberty and prosperity; which are in Scripture com- quam demersus pared to a broad place, where a man hath room enough. Thou homo, negs fubhast known my Soul in adversity (sai h David, Psal. 31.7,8.) and liftere, neg; ehast not shut me up in the hand of the enemy; thou hast set my feet mergere potest. in alarge Room, that is, in a prosperous condition. Thus Elihu

est ingens calamitas, abyf-

here promiteth on Gods behalf, He would have removed thee out of astreight, into a large place,

Where no freightress is;

Spatium latum

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That's a broad place indeed. No freightness implyeth greatest eft, ino latifi- enlargement, or enlargment to the uttermost, not only of need, mum, ubinul- but defice. A broad place, where there is no streightness, is full La angustia est. liberty, or fill of liberty. A man may be in a very good, in a very free condition, and yet have some streights. To be in so good a condition, as to have no streights at all, is the top and perfection of freedom. And furely, The full attainment of fuch an enlargedness, is the reward of the next life, not the enjoyment of this life. The way of the wicked, in this life, is most streightly broad; ell lara anguthe way of the righteous, in this life, is broadly streight, and endeth in a broadness of everlasting blessedness. God at last will reangusta latissi- move all his out of a streight, into a broad place, where there is no Hence,

justorum est me, et definit streightness. in latitudinem jucundistimam.

Vis impierum

First, See, the Author of our deliverance is again here remembred, He would have removed &c. As before, he delivereth the poor in afflictions, to here again, He would have removed thee out of a streight, into a broad place. As all our mercies are of the Lord, so let us acknowledge him in all.

Secondly, From the Allusion, Note;

Troubles are streights.

He is in a streight, that knows not what to do; thus 'tis oftenwith us in our troubles. It was so with good Jehoshaphat (2 Chro. 20.12.) when a mighty Enemy came up against him , Lord (said he) neknow not what to do, but our eyes are towards thee; he was in a streight, what to do here on earth, but he had a b oad place to look to, even to heaven, to the Lord of heaven and earth, our eyes are towards thee. As if he had faid, Lord me are in a ftreight, but thon art never in freights; Lord counsel us what to do, Lord help as to do it. The afflicted, many a time, know not what to do, and many times, they cannot do what they know; they know this thing would do them good, but they cannot do it, they know, that might be helpfull to them, but they cannot reach it.

He is in a streight that doubts what good to chuse, much more is he in a streight who seeth that what-ever he chuseth, he must chu e some evil. Paul was in the former streight, and David in the latter: Paul was in a streight, it was a trouble to him, being doubtfull, which good to chuse, (Phil. 1. 23.) I am in a freight betwise two; betwist what two? betwist two very good things, namely, living here in doing good, and going to heaven to receive his reward; he was in a streight whether to live here to do mo e work, or to go to heaven to receive the reward of his work. 'Tis fome trouble, but a bleffed trouble, when we are in a doub, which good to chuse. But they are in very great trouble, who are in such a streight, that whattoever they chuse, they must chuse evil: That was Davids streight, (2. Sam. 24. 14.) the Lord gave him a choyce, and a very sad one, of three evils, either of famine, or of peltilence, or of flying and falling before his Enemies; hereupon David said, I am in a great streight ; somewhat he must chuse, and what-ever he chose, it was evil, that is, penal evil; but seeing it was so, and could not be otherwise, (e malis minimum) he would chuse the least, he chose to fall into the hand of God, rather than into the hands of men. Into such kind of streights are the people of God sometimes cast, they have somewhat before them to chuse, but what-ever they chuse, it is very hard, and troublesome; troublesome to stay, and troublesome to go, troublesome to abide by ir, and troublesome to flie from ir, every way it is a trouble; and how many of the precious people of God have been brought into these troubles ! Only this is their comfort as well as their duty, that though they may be in such streights as necessitate them to chuse a leis good, or a penal evil, yet as God will not, fo man cannot bring them into any luch streights as necessitate them to chule a moral or hnful evil, I roubles are freights. He would have removed thee out of a freight into a broad place.

Hence Note, Thirdly; What-ever streights we are in, God is able to inlarge us,

The hand of the Lord is not shortned that it cannot save, (1sa, 59.

1.) There is no streight so strict, but the Lord can open is, and remove us out of it, or it from us. When the Children of Israel were in that great streight, having the Sea before them, and Pharaoh with his Host behind them, the Lord removed them out of that streight, and brought them into a large place. There are a chousand

vinæ pietatu januam clausibi aut non velle aut non posse misereri credit. Auguft: Ser: 88. de Temp:

thousand instances and experiences of this. David saith, (Pfal. 130. 1.) Out of the depths have I cryed unto thee O Lord: The depth there, and streight here, are the same under several Allusions. David cryed our of the depth of misery: when he was at the bottome of the pir, he cryed unto God, and was delivered. We can be in no depth, but the power and mercy of God can reach a hand to us, and draw us out; we can be in no streight, but the power of God can, and his love will make roome for us, that we may escape. Seeing then (as one of the Ancients speaks fully to this lit misereriquia poynt) God will help because he is so merciful, and can because he is bonus est, & fo powerful, that man souts the doore of hope against himself, who pollisquia on thinks, or through unbelieffears, that either God will not er cannot nipotens estrip- help him. And therefore when at any time we are in a streight, let the greatness of our streights, be the exercise of our faith, not a discouragement to it. Some make their streights a stop to their dit, qui deum faith, they cannot believe they shall be delivered out of great streights; but the greatness of our streights, should quicken, not deaden our faith, it should encrease our faith, not weaken it : and fo it will, if we confider who it is that undertakes to remove his people out of their streights; it is the great God; and the more their freights are, the greater their difficulties are, the greater is his glory in removing any of them into a large place, 'Tis faid in the Pfalm, The Lord makes a way for his anger; he do h do fo sometimes, he makes a broad way for his anger; yet remember he makes a way for his love and mercy too, that his great power may be seen in opening our greatest streights.

Fourthly, Whereas, 'tis not only faid, He would remove thee into a large place, but, into a large place, where there is no streight-

ness.

Observe : God can bring his afflicted people perfectly out of freights, and fet

thene out of the reach of danger.

Our comforts in this world are usually mixed with forrows, our enlargements with streights; yet the Lord is able to give us forrowless comforts, and such enlargements as shall not have the least shadow of a streight in them. As Jesus Christ saveth us to the uttermost of soul-streights, or we are saved through Christ to the uttermost of our fins, that is, of our guilt and danger of condem.nation

demnation by fin; so he can save us also to the uttermost of outward troubles, he can give a perfect temporal falvation, fuch a falvation as shall have nothing of feare or danger in this life: Elihu speaks of such a salvation. The Lord can save us to the uttermost of present perils, and set us beyond the reach of peril, even in such a place, where there shall be no feare, no suspicion of annoyance. Tis said (Pro. 10. 22.) The bleffing of the Lord maketh rich, and he giveth no forrow with it. The Lord makes some men rich, or gives them a great estate, yet they find forrow enough with it; but the Lord, through his bleffing, can give riches, and add no forrow with it, put no gravell in our bread, nor gall in our cup, but all shall be sweet to us; that's bringing us into a large place, where there is no present streightness, no, nor appearing cause to feare any. Thus the Nations are brought in rejoycing at the fall of Babyton, (Isa. 14.7,8.) The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet, they break forth into singing, yea the fir-trees rejoyce at thee, and the Cedars of Lebanon, Saying, since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us. The Lord will work full deliverance for his people Positio vel reby Babylons fall; when that falls, Sion shall not feare the coming of guies. Heb: a any more fellers, Christ will then give his faithfull people such enlargement as shall know no streights.

Chap. 36.

This is the first allusion; He would have removed thee out of the mia adjuncte. streight into o broad place, where there is no streightness; it fol- Pisc. loweth,

And that which should be set on thy Table, should be full of positio O re-

Here's the second mercy. As if he had said, The Lord would not sam deponuntur have given thee a bare deliverance out of evil, but thou should'st bave received abundance of good; thou shouldst not only have jumanta vocarroome enough, but comfort enough;

That which frould be fet on thy Table, should be full of fatness. hominibus ser-

Some render, That which resteth, or abideth on thy Table; that Vicina suntrais, thy mear, and thy drink, thy wine, and thy oyle, that which thou dices Tha guiefeedest upon, should be of the best and most nourishing, not bare vit to TI pocommons, not ordinary fare, but

radice 1713 quod est requiefcere Meton -

Est abstractim pro concreto, quies, pro iis quæ sper mena fercularits; tur, servitus fuit; quod enim

ponitur in ali-! Full tur ut requie cat. Merc:

Full of fatness.

Fatness is put in Scripture to express the best of things; it often signifiech the best of spiritual things, (Pfal. 36.8.) They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatress of thy house. The house of God is the Church of God, and, God keeps a good house, there are fac things, and they who worship and wate upon him, they shall have abundance of them, their full fatisfaction: the fatness of Gods bouse, is the riches of Grace, the best of Gospel-Ordinances and promises, the best of Gospel-comforts and mercies, these are the fatness of the house of God; these are the things which the Apostie intended while he told the Gentiles, (Rom. 11. 17.) That they were partakers of the root and fatness of the Olive tree. Thus also spake the Prophet, (Ifa. 25. 6.) In this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make a feast of fat things: what, of such fat things as the Epicures of the world furfet upon, Sheep, and Oxen, &c? no; the feast of fat things which the Lord will make to his people is of spiritual things, they shall have much of Christ, much of grace here, and an affurance of glory for hereafter; This is the feast of fat things. And though the Lord give to any of his servants the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, though the figtree should not blossome to them, though they should have neither Sheep in the fold, nor Calves in the stall, yer they may daily fit at this feast of fat things, and be filled with joy in the Lord, (Hab. 3. 17, &c.)

And as fatness is used in Scripture to express the best of spiritual things, so fatness expresseth the best of natural and outward good things, (Pfal. 65. 11.) Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy paths drop fatness; that is, plenty, and plenty of the best things which grow out of the earth by the bleffing and benigne influences of Heaven. I conceive spiritual good things, the best of them, are also shadowed under those expressions of Temporal.

Further, Eliha doth not only say, That which shall be set upon Lautifime fus- thy Table shall be fat, but, full of fatness; which implyeth thus vislimeq; vi- much. Thou shalt have whatsoever may make thy life comfortable, and happy; for as by bread, our dayly bread, we are to understand all the necessaries of this life (though bread be the meanest part of our sustenance, yet it it is called the staff of life, because the most necessary part of it) so by fatness, we are to understand all things delicate

delicate and delicious; and those things which are most delicate and delicious, are said to be full of fatness.

Hence Note; First, God, who delivereth his people from trouble, or out of freights, can also fill and furnish them with comforts.

The mercy of God doth not only take away evil, and so leave us, it doth not only bring us out of our freights, and there fet us down; but mercy proceeds to the bestowing of good upon us. As we in obedience should not put off the Lord with abstaining from evil, but ought to do good, even abundance of good, and not only bring forth good, but much good fruit; that's our duty; so the Lords mercy stayeth not in delivering us from evil, but bestoweth good things, the best things upon us, and them in abundance.

Secondly, In that those good things are exprest by fatness, or by being full of fatness,

Note; The Lord thinks nothing too good for his good people.

When once a people, or a person are accepted of God, he spares no cost, nor thinks any thing too costly for them, the most delicious things in the world are not too good for them, (Pfal, \$1.16) He would have fed them also wish the finest of the wheat, and with honey out of the rocks should I have fatisfied thee. I would not have fed them with wheat only, that's good, but with the finest whear, that's the best; we put in the Margin, with the fat of wheat; they should not have had the bran, but the flowre and the finest of the flowre!they should have had not only honey, but honey out of the Rock, which, as Naturalists observe, is the best and purest honey. Surely God cannot think any thing of this world too good for his people, who hash not thought the next world, too good for them; Certainly God cannot think any of these outward enjoyments too good for his people, who hath not thought his Son too good for his people; that's the Apostles argument, (Rom 8. 32.) He that Spared not bis own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall be not with him also freely give us all things? even the best of outward good things, when he feeth it good for us.

In this see the difference of the spirit of the world, and of God,

to his people. The world thinks nothing bad enough for those that they are the choycest servants of God, they are forry to see that they have any thing that is good; that they have a morsel of bread, or a penny in their purses, is thought too much for them by the world: And if any trouble befall them, its good enough for them, will the World say. The World thinks any thing too good for the choycest servants of God, how much more the choycest things! But God hath other thoughts towards them, he thinks nothing too good for them, they shall be filled with fatness.

Thirdly, In that Elibu makes promise of these outward things, to the choyce servants of God, whose ears are open to attend un-

to him;

Note; Even outward mercies, and a full Portion of outward mercies, fall sometimes to the share of the faithful servants of God in this World.

Though suchare not of this World, much less are servants to the World, yet God can make the world ferve them with its best, and give them a full portion of the World, though the World be not their portion. The servants of God would not take all the World, if it were offered them, for their portion, no not a thousand Worlds, confidering what a perishing thing this World is, and that at best it is but a finite thing; I say, a servant of God would not take all the World, at the hand of God, for his portion, though he is thankful for any thing, for a little of it, and unworthy of any, the least, part of it. Howbeir, many times God gives a large portion of this World to his people, and that which he ferd upon their Table, that is, outward good, is full of fatness. Indeed some of the choyce servants of God have been afraid when they have seen much of the World come in least God should put them off with such worldly things; when their Table hath been full of fatness and dainties, when they have had Houses and Lands, Gold and Silver plenty, they have been troubled, least God should say to them, There is your All. It is faid of Luther, when he had a confiderable present sent him from a great Prince (the Duke of Saxony, as I remember) this came upon his heart, I hope God will not put me off with thefe things, with gifts from Princes; I shall be hungry as long as I live, if I have nothing to feed upon but

what is of the World, and poor as long as I live, if I have no other treasure, but what is earthly; & thereupon protested he would not be satusfied with the best things of this World, though content with any thing. Thus, I say, God deals bountifully, with a liberal hand, to some of his people especially. This was made good in the former, or Old Testamenutimes, when the promises went more upon externals (as hath been shewed) whereas now they go more upon spiritual and heavenly things; yet there wants not examples of Gods dealing bountifully in outwards with his saithful servants under the Gospel, he hath caused that which was set upon their Table, to be sull of satuess.

This is the first part of the Application, wherein Eliha acquaints Job what God would have done for him, if he had carried it humbly (as he should) under his afflicting hand, he had been out of his setters and bonds before that time, and set in a large place, he had not sed so long upon ashes, his Table had been full

As in this verse Elihu applyed the matter to Job, by shewing him how it should have fared with him, or how graciously and bountifully God would have dealt with him, if he had humbled himself, as he ought, and been duly affected with the afflicting hand then upon him, so in the following verse, he applyes the Doctrine to him, by telling him, that the reason why he was at the present in such an afflicted condition, was, because he had not so humbled himself in his affliction.

Vers. 17. But thou hast fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked, therefore Judgment and Justice take hold on thee.

This is a home Application indeed, he speaks to his face, Thou hast done it, then hast sulfilled the Judgment of the wicked; which is, as a home, so a very hard and heavy charge. Take a twofold Interpretation of it.

Fift, Some expound it (I think not rightly) of Jobs ill carriage in the time of his prosperity; as if Elihu had reslected upon that: Thou hast heretofore fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked, and that, First, by a general ill course of life. As Christ saith to the Pharisees (Math. 23. 32.) Fill ye up the measure of your fathers; some conceive Elihus speaking to Job in that sence, Thou hast silled up the measure of the wicked, following them in their

Offician impii evil wayes. Secondly, That in his Magistratical capacity, or that implevisti, a.d. being a Magistrate, he had fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked; Optimi et in- that is, what wicked men, and their bad Causes wanted of Officio defuifti, weight and truth, of righteousness and goodness, that he filled up impii munus et by favour, by accepting their persons, and giving countenance ro paries obiisti, their wickedness. Some charge him thus directly, Thou hast done Cajet.

Sed receptifithy hand, thou wast defective, short, or wanting, in discharging ginalis senten- the Duty of an upright Judge, but didst the work of a corrupt tia oft Judici- Judge (corrupting Judgment) to the full; therefore now Fustice and Judgment take hold of thee. But (as I said before) this sium. Pined. is not a right Exposition of the Text; for Elihu never charged Job with a finful course of life in former times, or before his affliction (as his friends had done) though he charged him with much fin in his carriage under his afflictions; and it may be conceived, that Fob heard Elihu more patiently and equally than he heard his friends, because Elihu dealt more equally and candidly with him, than his Friends did; he did not lay it upon him, as if in the foregoing part of his life he had traded in wickedness; but only reproved him for his boldness, in dealing with, and appealing so often unto God, in his soars and sickness; or, because his spirit was not broken enough, notwithstanding those fore breakings and ficknesses, with which he was afflicted. So then, Elihu in saying this, intended not that Job had fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked, either by a wicked conversation, or by perverting Justice in fayour of the wicked: Such a charge had been utterly inconfishent with the Testimony which God gave of him in the first Chapter of this Book.

Therefore Secondly, Thou bast fulfilled the judgement of the wicked, may be understood, first, that Job had gone near, in his behaviour under his affliction, to do even almost as Saran boafted, and prefumed to God he would do, in the second Chapter, that if God did but lay his hand home or closer upon him, and touch his bone and his flesh, then (said Satan) he will curse thee to thy face. Now, though Job did never, in the height, fulfill this wicked opinion or judgement of the Devil concerning him, yet by his often complainings of, and murmurings about the fevere dealings of God with him, and his not pictying him in his diffress, he verged upon it, he came somewhat towards, and much too near

the fulfilling of that judgement of the wicked one; and Elihu might lay, Thou haft fulfilled the judgement of the wicked, thou halt done (in a degree or fnew) as the Devil said thou wouldst, if the hand of God were heavy upon thy body.

Secondly, These words, Thou hast fulfilled the judgement of the wicked, may have this meaning, Thou haft rendred thy felf guilty of, or obnoxious to, that judgement which God useth to pro-

nounce and execute upon wicked men.

Chap. 36.

Thirdly, Thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the micked; that is, thou under the hand of God halt carried thy felf as wicked men usually do, thou hast imitated them in a great measure. More implorum What do wicked men when the hand of God is upon them? citie impution what do wicked men when the hand of God is upon them? gift impatient they rage and murmur, they toyl themselves and are full of the tercontra defury of the Lord, as a wild Bull in a net; thou feemelt to have um murmuranfulfilled this judgment of the wicked, for thou haft been so far do. Sanct. from humbling thy felf, as thou oughtest, that thou halt stood it out and stouted it with God, and defired a day of hearing; Hast thou not in all this fulfilled the judgment of the wicked? In the 34th chapter of this book at the 8th verse, Elihu told Job, that he had gone in company with the wicked, that is, that he had taken the same course with the wicked, and as they use to do in the day of their calamity. And that's the meaning of Elihu's charge here, Thou hast fulfilled the judgement of the wicked, that is, thou hast carried thy felf too too like wicked men in the day of thy trouble. Thus Tob is here censured, not strictly, as if he had done like wicked men, but because he did not suffer so patiently as because a good man; this was in him a fulfilling of the judgment of the wicked.

Hence note ;

Not to submit heartily, and humble our selves freely, when the afflicting hand of God is apon us, is to do very finfully, even like the micked.

I shall not stay upon this, having spoken of the extream sinfulness of murmuring and impatience under the hand of God heretofore.

Secondly, Note;

If we give way to any corruption, or passion, it will quickly carry us a very great way in fin, and from our duty. Pp 2

They that are good in their state, may sometimes in their acts, (as Job here) fulfil the judgment of the micked. As hypocrites fulfil, in appearance, the judgment of the upright, that is, do like upright men; so the upright may, in appearance, do like hypocrites, and then they also sulfil the judgement of the wicked. Job said to his wife, in the second chapter, Thou speakest like a feolish woman; and now Elihu tells him, thou hast spoken and done as a wicked man.

Note, Thirdly;
They who do like the wicked, must not think much if they be numbred with the wicked, and involved in the same outward evils and judgments which usually fall upon wicked men.

Though we may not judge such a mans eternal estate like that of the wicked, yet as to this or that act, we may (without breach of charity) number him among the wicked, and he may quickly feel the same smart which the wicked feel. They that are godly should act like godly men, and not do any thing that represents the lusts or practises, the judgement or conversation of the ungodly; less it be said (in one sence or other) of them, as here Elihu of Job, you also have suffiled the judgement of the micked.

Therefore judgment and justice take hold of thee.

As if he had said, I told thee before, if thou had'st humbled thy self, thou shouldest have had a large place, and full table, slore of mercies and favours; but now judgment and justice take hold of thee. Here are two words which sometimes are used distinctly, but here they signifie the same thing, or the one is but an explanation of the other. Justice and Judgment; some take justice for the habit, and judgment for the set, exercise or decree; as if he had said, Justice hath sent forth Judgment upon thee, and now both take hold of thee; God hath noted thy sin in thy sad condition. Yet the original doth not determine it upon Jobs person expressly, it doth not say, Justice and Judgment take hold of thee, but Justice and Judgment take hold; we supply they take hold of thee, for that's it which Eliba intends; Justice and Judgment take hold of thee, of Job, nor will they let thee go. We find the word so used in several places, (Prov. 3. 18.) Wisdom is a tree

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of life to them that lay hold upon her. And as the believers closing with and hold-fast upon Christ is expressed by this word, so also is the hold which fin takes of an unbeliever (Prov. 5. 23.) His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sin. Judgment and Justice take hold of thee.

Hence Note; First, God will not indulge fin in any, no not in his own servants.

If a Job do like wicked men, he shall smart like the wicked. Though God will not cast any of his servants to hell for ever, yet they may be cast into a temporary hell. The Lord told David as much, in case his Children should disebey him, and break covenant with him, though he would not cast them off, yet they should pay dearly for it; He would visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes, (Pal. 89. 32.) The History of Davids children makes good that Prophesie, and so hath the dealings of God with believers in all ages, who are the feed, the children of David mystical, that is, of Christ, whom and whose spiritual children the Spirit of God chiesly pointed at in that Psalm. They that do like evil men, shall suffer like evil men. Justice and Judgment properly and strictly take hold of the wicked and disobedient only, as the Apostle saith (1 Tims. 1.9.) The Law is not made for a righteeus man, but for the lawless and disbedient, &c. Yet when they that are righteous are found doing like the lawless and disobedient, the Law, that is Juffice and Judgment will take hold of them.

Again, Some read the words intransitively, Justice and Judgment hall hold, or hold on fill, that is, they will hold on their course Causa & juor way in punishing, as long as thou hold'ft on thy course or way dicium retiin finning.

Hence note; So long as any man Eves in any fonful way, he shall find Justice vigorem faum and Judgement taking hold of him. Justice will not leave in survis. finners till they have left their fins.

Again, Justice and Judgment take hold of thee, that is, they hold thee faft.

> Hence note; There's no getting out of the hand of divine Fustice.

Tygurina legis nebunt, i. c. Sustenzabung

Men

Men oftentimes get out of the hand of man's justice, they can break prison, they can file off their fetters and cast their cords from them; but none can break Gods prison, none can get out of the hands of divine Justice. As Justice and Judgement shall take hold of, attach and arrest sinners, so they will hold them fast, they cannot make an escape, nor can any rescue them till God signes a warrant for their release. We cannot hinder God in the exercise or execution of Justice, nor turn him aside from his purpose, either by our power or pollicies. God can eafily hinder men of their purposes, and can undo what-ever they have done, but none can make the Justice and Judgment of God let go their hold. Therefore let us take heed, while we hold fin and iniquity, nothing can deliver us from the hand, or hold off the fin-chaftning and avenging hand of God. However men fail, the Justice and Judgment of God are everlasting; they hold on their course Hill though men do not. Though we could pluck the Sun out of the firmament, yet not Justice out of the hand of God. We can neither put God besides his rule, nor force him from his purpose. These are the two great Prerogatives of God, he hath first a righteousness which cannot be perverted; secondly, a Justice which cannot be interrupted.

J O B, Chap. 36. Vers. 18, 19 20.

18. Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.

19. Will be esteem thy riches? no, not gold, nor

all the forces of strength.

20. Desire not the night, when people are cut off in their place.

In these three verses Eliha presset the Application of the former Doctrine upon Job, by way of admonition and counsel; for a simulation as he had done amiss before, and carried himself unduly under the hand of God, even so far as to fulfil the counsel of the wicked, that therefore he would now, & for the time to come, take heed, and be more wary.

And lest Job should slight this admonition or counsel, Eliha adds a powerful motive to urge that duty upon him, even the

wrath of God; Beware, Why?

Because there is wrath ;

Beware, and beware lest (this wrath breaking forth) be take thee away with a stroke. And how dreadful the wrath of God is, Eliha thews in these three verses by a threefold Consideration.

First, because if we fall into the Lords hand, when he is in wrath, there is no meanes under heaven that can deliver or bring us off. This he affertesh at the latter end of the 18th verse, Then a great ransome cannot deliver thee. It is dangerous coming under that wrath, from which a ransome, especially a great ransome, cannot deliver. What that ransome is which cannot deliver us is expressed in the 19th verse, Will he esteem thy riches? no, not gold.

A Second motive to beware of this dreadful wrath is this, because if once the wrath of God be up, as there is no ransom, so no power in the creature that can deliver. That we have in the latter part of the 19th verse, nor all the forces of strength; though thou hast armies, millions of men in armes, yea though thou hast legions of Angels in pay, yet they cannot prevail, all the forces of

frength cannot deliver thee.

There is also a third consideration, to shew the unavoidableness of the wrath of God, namely, because there is no sleeing no
making an escape from it. Some indeed are so angry that you
cannot satisfy them with a ransom, and so powerful that no strength
can deliver you from their power, yet possibly you may make an
escape and hide from them, you may get out of the way and lye
out of sight; but saith Elihu, that will not do neither in this case,
(v. 20.) descre not the night when people are ent off in their place;
the night or darkness will be no cover to thee from the wrath of an
angry God. Thus you have the sum and substance of this admonition to Job, Beware, because there is wrath, and that wrath of God so
terrible that nothing can deliver from it, no ransom, no power, nor
can we deliver our selves by slight, or by darkness.

I shall now open the words more distinctly.

Verse 18. Because there is wrath, beware, &c.

ealer, ira, a
DN
caluit, inceluit,
quod iracundi
incalescunt.

The word which we translate wrath, comes from a root that fignifies heat, or to be hot; and we know they that are angry and in wrath are very hot, their mind and spirit are enslamed, we use to say to an angry man, why are you so hot; the wrath of man is hot:

the wrath of God, is certainly much hotter.

Because there is wrath; but where is it? I answer, First, there is wrath, in the breast or heart of God, there his anger is kindled against sinners. Secondly, There is wrath in the decree of God, against sinners (Zeph. 2.2.) Thirdly, there is wrath in the threatnings of God, there it first appeares and breaketh forth (Dent. 29. 20.) So the Apostle (Rom. 1.18.) The wrath of God is revealed from beaven. How is it revealed? As his love is revealed in promises, so his wrath in threatnings. Fourthly, there is wrath in the works of God, in his Judgments acted upon the children of men. As there is wrath hidden in his breast and decreed, so wrath is heard from his mouth in terrible threatnings, and seen in his hand by terrible Judgments executed upon his enemies. We may see wrath in the dealings of God; his works tell us he is angry. Therefore fear to persist, lest in his anger he take thee quite away. We should beware of sinful works, lest we provoke and sir up the Lords anger to make bloody work. There is wrath, (particularly

larly as to the dealings of God with thee, O Job, saith Elihu) therefore,

Beware.

The word beware, is not expressly in the Hebrew text, but it is plainly intended, and supplied by Interpreters, in general, to make up and clear the sence of this verse. We have a like reading in the 36th of Isaiah, v. 18. Beware lest Hezekiah perswade you, &c. The word beware, is a supplement added there in a different character, to shew that it is not expressed in the Hebrew. As if Rabshakeh had said, If Hezekiah perswade you to stand out against my Master Sennacherib, you will provoke his wrath to your utter ruine and destruction, therefore beware. There, as here, beware, bespeakes our caution; because there is wrath, take heed what you do or say.

Hence note, First;

There is a wrath of God against sin, or, God will appear in wrath against sinners.

The Apostle John in his first Epistle (Chap. 4.8.) tells us in a direct predication, God is love; and tis as true, God is wrath. The wrath of God is a divine persection, it is the persection of God, as his love is. God is one and the same, he is not divided into several passions, perturbations or affections; but thus the Scripture speaks of him, to denote what we may expect from him, and what he is and will be in his actings towards them who obey him not.

Secondly note;
The wrath of God appears and is put forth in his works of judgment.

As the goodness of God is his love acted, or as the good thing is which God doth for us are love-actions, so the evils that are upon us are wrath-actions. I do not say that every evil which we endure in this world is the acting of wrath upon us, but I say, there is wrath in the actings of evil upon us. Moses said to Aaron, (Numb 16.46.) Go quickly, take a Censer (hast, hast) and make an atonement, there is wrath gone out. How did he know wrath was gone out? He tells us in the next words, the plague is begun:

begun: He saw wrath in that dispensation of God; the plague begun a gued that God was angry. Because there is wrath, beware.

Hence note, Thirdly;
We should by all meanes take heed and beware of the wrath of
God.

The wrath of man is a small matter to the wrath of God, yet we are very careful to beware of the wrath of man, especially of great men. The wrath of the Kings and Princes of the world, is like the roaring of the Lion, litth Solomon, and we are ready to tremble at that; but O how should we tremble at, and beware of the wrath of God! Who knoweth the power of thine anger? (Pfal. 90. 11.) We may take some scantling, some measure of the wrath of man, and know how far it can go, and what it can do; but we can take no measure of the wrath of God, for it is immefurable, and therefore we should avoid every thing that procures his wrath. That's the meaning of this caveat; do nothing that blowes up or incenses the wrath of God. But what is it that blowes up wrath? It is fin, every fin hath that in it which may blow up wrath. The Apolile faith, The wrath of God is revealed from heaven, against all ungodliness and unrighteonfress of men, not only against this or that ungodliness, nor only against this or that degree of ungodliness, ('tis neither against ungodliness of some special kind, nor of some special degree) but against all ungodliness, therefore all ungodliness and all unrighteousness is to be avoided.

And as we should do nothing to provoke wrath, so we should do every thing which may prevent wrath (Pial. 2. 12.) Kiss the Son, why? less he be angry, and his wrath kindle. Who is the Son, and what's this kissing of the Son which prevents wrath? The Son is Christ, he is the Son of God; this kissing is a kiss of homage, an hun ble submission to Jesus Christ by faith and obedience; it is a Gospel receiving of Christ: to kiss the son is to receive Christ as our King, as our Priest, as our Propher, to receive Christias our King, as our Priest, as our Propher, to receive Christias our king, as our Priest, as our Propher, to receive Christias our king, as our Priest, as our Propher, to receive Christias the whole manifestation of his Mediatorship. Do this to prevent weath, kits the Son. And consider how terrible he reports that wrath to be; If his wrath be kindled but a little blessed are they that put their trust in him. On then take heed that you do not provoke the weath of God, and do your utmost to prevent it; which

which nothing can do but killing the Son, that will and that only can do it; submit to Jesus Christ, receive Jesus Christ, without him it is impossible to prevent wrath. He that believes not, the wrath of God abideth on him, (John 3.36.) Jesus Christ alone is he which delivereth us from the wrath to come, (I Thef. I. 10.) And if we further consider this wrath from the expression, both of the Pialm and of the Text, it should make us (who are so fearful of, and who so thist from the wrath of men) exceedingly afraid of the wrath of God. The word, as was shewed before, comes from a root which fignifieth the heat of fire, implying that the wrath of God is fire, and (Heb. 10. 27.) it is called fiery indignation; yea, God himself (Heb. 12.29.) is called a consuming fire. Why doth the Scripture express him and his wrath, by fire? Surely because fire is well known to us, and we are well able to conceive how dreadful a thing fire is, when it is in its rage and fury, when it hath got the mastery; Fire is a comfortable servant, but a dreadful master. Now as fire is the most dreadful element, so wrath is the most dreadful attribute of God; yet I may fay, that elementary fire which (as to our sence) is so dreadful, is but a sun-shine compared to the wrath of God; as will appear if we confider it in two things.

First, it burns internally. The visible fire burns but visible things, outward things, but this fire burns within, scorches the conscience, burns the soul, burns that which all the fires in the world cannot reach, cannot touch. God is a Spi it, and the wrath of God is a fire that butnes the spirits, and will for ever afflict and torment the consciences of wicked men. The hotrest fires which the most enraged malitious Persecuters kindle, cannot touch the spirit; the conscience is quiet, the soul triumphs while the flesh fries in the fire. 'Tis the fire of divine wrath alone which hath power upon the soul; and a burning there is ten thousand times

more painful than the burning of our flesh.

Secondly, the wrath of God burns eternally. Your fires here though they are dreadful, yet they go out, they confume themfelves by confuming the matter or fuel cast into them; they cannot continue alwayes, because they eat up and devour that which maintaines them: But the wrath of God burns continually. God is called a consuming fire, not because the fire of his wrath consumes, but because he consumeth sinners in the fire of wrath;

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and when we fay, he consumeth finners in his wrath, or his wrath consumeth sinners, we are not to understand it of a consumption as to being, but only as to a well or comfortabe being; for not only the fouls, but the very bodies of finners shall remain in this fire of the wrath of God for ever unconfumed. The bodies of the damned shall be raised again at the great day, and being re-united to their fouls, both shal abide unconsumed in the fire of this consuming wrath eternally. The great dread of ordinary fire is, that it consumes what it burns, but the greatest dread of this fire is, that it consumes not that which it burns. O therefore take heed of the wrath of God, the wrath of God is terrible as to corporal and temporal judgements, much more as to spirituall and eternal judgments; that is, as the fire of his wrath burns both internally and eternally. Because there is wrath, beware,

Lest he take thee away with his stroke.

Here the danger is exprest. If the Lord be angry, he can soon take thee away with a stroke, he can remove, yea hurry thee away out of all thy present joys and enjoyments, to everlasting forrows. The word imports a violent remove. The stroke here spoken of is like that (Chap. 24. 26.) He striketh them as wicked men, in the open fight of others; that is, he shames them as well as punisheth them; as he strikes them with his hand to their consusion, so he strikes or claps his own hands together in dirision, as 'tis said (Chap. 27. 23.) Men shall clap their hands at him, and shall his him out of his place; we may take it in both these significations: Lest he take thee away with a stroke; that is, lest he strike thee fo as to make an utter end of thee, or lest he take thee away with derision, clapping his hands at thee, and pouring contempt upon thee. Have we not reason to beware of that wrath, which in either sepse can take us away with his stroke? Yet I conceive a third sense may be given of these words, Left he take thee away with his stroke, that is, lest he take thee away suddenly, even as suddenly as a stroke can be given.

Hence Note; First, God can presently firike to defruction,

He can take the strongest away with a stroke, he can do it with one stroke. The Lord needs not stand cutting and stalling, hack-

Cum complofione.

ing and hewing (as we fay) all day long; one stroke of his will doit. He took away Herod at one stroke (Alls 12. 23.) He took away Anasias and Saphira at one stroke (Ads 5. 5.) Nadab and Abihu were taken away with one stroke (Lev. 10.1.) All these perished, and so have thousands more, as with a Aroke, fo fuddenly, at one stroke. The Lord can strike home; as Abifhai faid to David in the case of Saul, when he found him in the Trench, Let me frike him at once, and I will not frike him a fecond time. The Lord threatned (Nah. 1.9.) to being destruction upon these at once, when he told them Affiction should not rise a second time; as if he had said, I will not strike another blow at them, I'le hit them home, and do my work with one blow. We need not fear how many, or how mighty his enemies are, he can rid kimfelf of them with one ftroke. The Lord strikes some to take away their fin; thus he strikes his own people: others he firikes to take away their persons; thus he strikes the wicked, especially those who enemy-like, designedly strike at Him, his Name, his Truth, his Glory. Elibu doth not fay, Beware leaft he frike thee, but least he take thee away with a froke. The Lord often strikes his own faithful servants, they receive many a stroke, many a lash, many a blow, many a chastisement at his hands, but he doth not take them away with a stroke, as he doth the wicked. The Lord strikes his servants to take away their fins, and he strikes wicked men to take away their lives, to destroy them utterly.

Secondly, As the word fignifieth taking away with clapping of

the hands or with derifion,

Note; God will even laugh at the ruine of wicked men,

He will clap his hands at their fall. We read (Prov. 1. 26, 27.) how Wisdome called and cried, and none would answer, all set her calls and counsels at naught; what followed? I (said Wisdome, that is, Christ) will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their sear cometh; as much as is said in the Text, I will take them away with a stroke, or with clapping my hands, with a kind of deriding plandite at their going off, or rather at their being thrust off the Stage of this world. They are in the most sad condition, whom God not only destroys, but derides; they have most cause to mourn in their affliction, at whose affliction God laughs.

laughs. It is said (fob 9.23.) God will laugh at the tryal of the innocent, and why, was thewed in opening that place; I only touch
it now upon this occasion: The Lord knows the innocent will
come off with honour, will stand it out in their tryal bravely, he
sees what Courage & Faith & Patience they will manisest in and
under their sufferings. Now as the Lord even claps his hands, and
laughs, when his chosen noble ones go forth to the tryal, knowing
they will honour him in their tryal; so the Lord laughs at the destruction of the wicked, knowing that his Justice and Righteousness shall have a full stroke at them, and lay both their shame and
sin open to all the world.

That the Lord in his wrath takes away with a stroke, should make us all beware, fear and tremble; but that which followeth, may make us wary, fear and tremble much more; for, saith Eli-

hu in the close of the verse,

Then a great Ransome cannot deliver thee.

Pretium, quod Auredu Graci appellant.

The word rendred a Ransome signifies that which is paid as a price for the deliverance of a Captive out of bondage: Thus Christ gave himself a Ransome for sinners. But here is a Cuse wherein no Ransome will be taken, no, though it be, not a small, petty Ransome, but a great Ransome, of that (saith Elibu) it cannot deliver thee. As if he had said, When once God is so far provoked, that the Decree is gone forth to destroy thee, then it will be in vain to think of getting off by Ransome.

Here it may be queried, What is this great Ransom that will not deliver? There is a twofold Ransome, by one of which the people of God are somtimes delivered, and alwayes by the other.

First, The people of God are somtimes ransomed or delivered by the destruction and ruine of the wicked; that's their Ransom, and that, not seldom, proves a great Ransome. It is said expressly (Prov. 21. 18.) The wicked shall be a Ransome for the righteous; how, a Ransome for the righteous! will a wicked man pay a Ransome for the righteous? or will the wicked man offer himself a Ransome for him, and say, I'le dye instead of the righteous man? surely there's no such thing to be expected from him. Peradventure for a good man (saith the Apostle, Rom. 5.7, 8.) one would even dare to dye; that is, one good man may possibly be willing to lay down his life for another good man. Scarcely for

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a righteous man would one dye; that is, for a man, who only gives every man his due, or doth every man right : but for a good man, that is, for a man that hath been very kind and bountiful to others, some would even dare to dye; yet he that doth so, must be supposed to be a righteous and a good man himself. For it cannot be thought that a wicked man would give himself a Ransome for the righteous, that he would dye for him whom he doth not love, yea, whom he usually hates to the death. How then is it affirmed by Solomon, that the wicked shall be a Ransome for the righteous? The meaning is, God will destroy the wicked, to save the righteous, or he will fave the righteous, even through the blood and destruction of the wicked: In that sence the wicked are many times a Ransome for the righteous, rather than the righteous shall perish, the Lord will destroy the wicked. Thus the Lord spake by his Prophet of old (Ifa. 43. 3.) I gave Egypt for thy Ransome, Ethiopia and Sheba for thee. How was Egypt a Ransome for Israel? had they any mind to deliver the people of God? no; but rather than God would not have Israel laved, he deltroyed Pharash and the Egyptians in the Red Sea. Thus the Lord makes the wicked a Rantome for the righteous. Though Egypt were a very goodly Country, yet God destroyed it by ten Plagues, that he might deliver Ifrael. Though Pharaob was a great Prince, he drowned him in the Sea, rather than his people should go back into Captivity. Solomon gives us this sense of the Prophets words fully in his own (Prov. 11. 8.) The righteons is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.

Secondly, There is another, a more excellent Ransome for the people of God, and that is the Blood of Jesus Christ: We are bought with a price, dearly bought, and that's the Price with which we are bought (1 Cor. 6. 20.) that's a Ransome which fets finners free, and makes them free indeed (Joh. 8. 36.) free from fin, and free unto righteousness (Math. 20. 28.) He gave himself a Ransome for many; for a great miny, for all who believe and take hold of his Name. When Elihu faith, A great Ransome sannot deliver, is not to be understood of the Ran'o ne which Chiff hath paid; that's a Ransome so great, so precious, that it hath, and doth, and will for ever deliver the greatest, the worst of

finners, who run to it from the wrath of God.

What then is the Ransome that is invalid and useless, which will not be accepted, which cannot deliver?

I answer, First, in general; it is any thing on this side Christ, be it what it will. The greatest Ransome that men can devise or heap up together, or that men can make, what soever it is, besides the Ransome of Gods own appointment, will not deliver a sinner

when once wrath hath fiezed upon him.

I answer, Secondly, as to particulars: It is not, First, Riches, no not Gold. Secondly, It is not our own prayers, no not tears. Thirdly, It is not our own good works, no not our own righteousness. Fourthly, It is not any of the good works or righteousness of any other, the holyest men on earth, no not the righteousness of the Saints and holy Angels in Heaven, that can deliver us from the wrath of God. The first of these particulars Elihu gives for instance in the 19th verse (of which I shall there speak further) and we may understand this verse of all the rest. Then a great Ransome cannot deliver thee.

Hence note;
There is nothing but the Blood of Christ can ransome sinners from the wrath of God, nor will that deliver some sinners.

(I suppose Elibu might have respect to that, in urging Job to humble himself and repent) There are Cases, wherein even the Blood of Christ will not deliver; though that hath an intrinsecal vertue, power, and value, to deliver any sinner, yet, I say, there are Cases, wherein even that great Ransome, the Blood of Christ, will not deliver sinners; or thus, there are many sinners in such a Case, that Christ will not ransome them by his Blood. But who are they?

First, All that are impenitent, and persist obstinately in their sins. If any man resolve to go on in sin, the Blood of Christ is no Ransome for him. Jesus Christ came to save us from our sins,

not to fave us in our fins.

Secondly, All that are unbelievers; though they have a great measure of sorrow (such as it is) for sin, yea, suppose they have left off the outward practise of those sins, for which they have sorrowed, yet if they do not lay hold on Christ by faith, his Blood is no Ransome for them. As Christ will not save presumptuous sinners, who believe without repenting, so neither will he save incredulous sinners, who repent without believing. Thirdly, That great price of the Blood of Christ is not a Ransome for apostatiz-

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ing finners, who having pretended to Repentance, and made profestion of faith, yee go back from Christ and his wayes, at once building what they feemed to have destroyed by repentance, and destroying what they seem'd to be built up in by faith. The Apostle declares the doom of all luch (Heb. 10. 26.) For if we fin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for fin. Wilful finners against received Light cast off the Sacrifice of Christ (which is our Ransome, and) with which they seemed to close; and having cast that off, God will never be at the cost to provide them another Sacrifice: There remains (faith the Text) no more Sacrifice for fin. They would have no more to do with that Sacrifice for fin (that's the case of those who fin against the Holy Ghost) and there is no other Sacrifice for them. Such Apostates crucifie to them elves the Son of God afresh, and (by their being ashamed of him, and turning from him, as much as in them lyes) put him to open shame, as the Apostle speaks (Heb. 6. 6.) but God will never crucifie his Son afresh, nor put him again to open shame, for the ransoming of wilful Apostates. It is the ground of our hope, that God once gave up his Son to be crucified for us, but they are of all men most hopeless, who crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh. The Son of God, Jesus Christ, will not save those that tread him under foot, nor shall the Blood of the Covenant be a Ransom for those who count it an unboly thing; as 'tis said at the 29th verse. They who refuse the Gospel, that is, Gospel-Grace, thall never have any benefit by the Gospel; these Apostates do not only refuse to chuse the Grace of the Gospel, but resuse it after a seeming choyce of it, and are therefore said in the close of that verse, to have done despite to the Spirit of Grace; and shall they who despite, and, which is more, do despite to the Spirit of Grace, be ransom'd through Grace? Thus we see, that as nothing but the Blood of Christ can be a Ransome, so some shall have no share in, nor benefit by that great Ransome. They who repent not, they who believe not, they who fin wilfully after a profession made, both of Faith and Repentance, can have no deliverance by that great Ransome, the Blood of Jesus Christ.

Eliku having rold fob in General, that if he provoked God to wrath, then a great ransome could not deliver him, proceeds to give him one particular instance of what cannot; and he gives it

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in that which is the most usual ransome, and which hath ransomed thousands from the wrath of man, that is, riches, gold.

Vers. 19. Will he efteens thy riches? no, not gold, nor all the forces of Arength.

As if he had said, Possibly, O Job, thou having been a great man, a rich man, the richest the greatest man in all the East, mayit think thou couldit buy off thy offence with gold, and get out from under his wrath by thy wealth and riches; but suppose thou wert as great and rich as ever, or greater and richer than any are, or ever were,

Will he esteem thy riches?

Thy ordinadinamur aliæ pro estimare

The word rendred esteem, signifies to put in order, because wis quiares things which are of esteem and value, are laid up handsomely and affimanda or orderly. As no man esteems trash, so he will not lay it up among his treasures. Will be efteem, or lay up thy riches, as some precious justa alias, ideo thing, as his treature; furely no. The question (as frequently in fumitur. Merc: Scripture) is a strong denial; will he? he will not value thy riches, no more than a rufh; what dost tell him of thy riches, he makes no account of all that thou hast to give, yea, though thou hadft all the world to give : Men will esteem thy riches, money answers all things among men, but alass, it will answer nothing with God, will be esteem

Thy riches?

Some translate the word which we render riches, by nobleness or greatness; so Mr Broughton, Will he esteem thy nobleness? The word fignifies both, and fob was both, he was a great man, and a Nobleman, the chief Magistrate, a Prince among the people where he dwelr, as appears fully in the 29th Chapter. Will he esteem either thy riches, or thy noblenels? Thalt thou be accepted because thou art a great Lord, a mighty man, dost thou think the Lord will esteem thee for this? Certainly no. We may take in both senses of the word, will be esteem thy riches, or Nobleness?

Hence note, First; Greatness mithout gordness, is of little or no efteem with God.

Note,

Note, Secondly: God will not be taken off by any outward respect what soever, from bringing vengeance upon evil men.

God will not be stept in his course of Justice, with riches or great titles, with honour, or nobleness: The riches or one man cannot ransome another, (Pfal. 49. 7, 8, 9.) They that trust in their wealth, and boaft themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ranfome for him. Nor can any mans riches ranfome himsely (Pro. 10. 2.) Treasures of wickedness (that is, treasures gotten wickedly) profit nothing. Nor will the treasures of the wicked (though wellgotten) profit them, (Pro. 11. 4.) Riches availe not in the day of wrath, (Zeph. 1.7.) Their gold and filver shall not profit them in the day of my wrath. If you present your selves before God with titles of honour, and bags of gold, neither the one nor the other will do it, he will not regard thy riches, nor nobleness. When Istemael came treacherously upon those Jewes, ten of them said, Slay us not, (Jer. 4.8.) for we have great treasures in the field, of Wheat, and of Barly, and Oile, and of Wine; so he forbare, and flew them not among their brethres. But this will not do in the day of the Lords anger.

Will he esteem thy rishes?

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Some translate thus, Will be regard thy crying or clamor? As if ginta id in Elihu had said, Cry as much as thou wilt, the Lord will not regard videntur, nam it. This goes higher. Many possibly will not be taken-off from the vertunt senprocess of Justice, by greatness or riches, who yet by our humble of us UNU osupplication and cry may be taken off; But will the Lord regard pulentus dives thy cry? or as the Septuagint read it, Will he have regard to thy you per scuprayer? Wicked men that have rejected the Lords commands, rec significate will yet hope, or rather presume, the Lord will hear their cry, opes, cap. 30. and therefore they will be at their prayers in times of trouble, when the wrath of God breaks out; this is their last refort and re- Non estimabit fuge. They who never made the Lord their choyce in good times, clamorem tuwill yet make him their refuge in evil times, or in dayes of trou- um, nihil ducit ble; they think surely to be sheltered, and saved, and spaced, quantum vis when they pray: but this will not do neither; will be esteem thy dames, non ea prayers? The Hebiew Text, at least, allows, if not clearly holds pro distrib

VIW clamavit. Septua-

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out this reading, and it can be no hurt to take in as much profitable fense, as the words, without undue straining, may hold out to us. So then, when the Lords wrath appears, neither riches, nor honour, nor prayers, nor teares can give finners any relief. The cryes and prayers of the wicked are no more regarded by God, than their riches or greatness. Then they frall call upon me, (faith Wifdome, Pro. 1. 28.) that is, When their feare cometh as defolation, and their destruction cometh as a Whirlewind, when distress and anguish cometh upon them, (v. 27.) when 'tis thus with them, then they shall call upon me, but I will not answer; that is, I will not esteem their cry. That's a very remarkable Scripture, (Pfal. 18. 41.) where David speaking of his enemies, how the Lord had given him their necks, and a power to destroy them that hated him, presently adds, They cryed, but there was none to fave them, (but it may be they cryed where they should not for help; no, taith the Text, they cryed) even to the Lord, but he answered them not: then did I beat them as small as the dust before the wind, &c. The Lord having declared how refolv'd he was to proceed in a way of wrath against the Temish Nation, adds (Fer. 14. 12.) When they fast I will not bear their cry. That people had been very obstinate and rebellious, they had withstood the call of God by the Prophet; yet when they saw wrath appearing and approaching, then they betook themselves to fasting and prayer; but saith the Lord, it shall not advantage them, though they fast and in their fasting cry, yet I will not regard them, nor be entreated: I know they will be praying to me, but I will take no notice of them. See how dreadfull a thing it is to refuse the offers and tenders of grace, to go on in a way of fin; for then, no ransome will do it, riches and honours, yea prayers and cryes and teares, shall not be regarded. Will be effeem thy riches ?

No not gold.

This is to be joyned (according to our translation) with the former words, and it suits sully with our translation of these words; Gold being the best of worldly riches, and having the greatest power with and command over men; yet saith! Elihu, Will he esteem thy riches, no not Gold. He mentions that, because (I say) it is the choicest part of riches, the worst fort of gold is of higher esteem and worth, than any other mettal; Gold beares the greatest

test price among metals, and hath the greatest prevalency among men, but none with God. The word rendred Gold, fignifies defending, but gold is no defence against God. Will he esteem thy riches? no not Gold. The note is the same in substance with the former.

The Lord regards not men for their riches, no not for the best of riches.

Not only will he not esteem your Copper, and Brasse, and Iron and Tynn, but not your Gold, (1 Pet. 1. 18.) Gold doth much with men, but nothing with God. I shall not stay upon this clause, it being only an hightning of the same thing before asserted. But

There are two other readings of the latter part of this verse,

upon which I shall stay a little: First, thus;

Will be esteem thy riches? no not in affliction.

The word which we render as one, fignifying the best gold, re- Ne guidem in fined gold, other interpreters render as two words, which fignifie anguitia 732 to be perplexed or in freights; Will be effects thy riches? no ego nomen though thon art in the greatest freights, and knowest not what to angustia; alii

Hence Note; The Lord will not regard rich micked men, when they are in streights.

The Lord who esteems not the wicked rich at any time, will in accentu dilest esteem them in an evil time. The Lord who hath an esteem singuente pro of, and a regard to the godly at all times, hath it especially in a 742 Pisc: time of streights and trouble. But as the Lord never regards wicked men, so then lest when they have most need of it. Will he esteem them? no not in affliction.

There is a third reading of these words: Will he esteem thy ri- 752 in piel, shes? no not any defence. As our translation, no not gold, falls in contra rapinas plainly with the first words of the Text; so this with the latter. Municit, bine Will be esteem the riches, no not gold, say we, answering the word lestissimum, riches in the first part of the verse. Will he esteem thy riches? no not quasi ab igno defense, say others, which answers those words, nor all the forces of munitum aut firength, in the latter part of the verse. So then, as our reading quod fit horis complyes with the former part of the verse, so this hath as faire a tume

reddunt in fignificatione auri, in qua reperitur, cap. 22. 24. sed ibi Scribitur. 757

compliance with the latter; No not any defence. The word fignifies to fartify, to sence, to make strong, and hence, gold, because gold is mans strength and defence. Riches are a great strength; to be rich in gold is a mans strong tower. Will he esteem thy riches? no, not gold, or defence,

Nor all the forces of strength.

These words, in the close of the verse, being the same with the middle part, as last rendred, may very well be drawn up into one, and conceived of, as if Elihu had said, Suppose thou are a mighty man and hast strong forces, he will not esteem thee for all that; The very weakness of God is stronger than man (1 Cor. 1.25.) that is, than the strongest man, or than any strength which man can procure, either to oppose God, or to protect himself against him. The Prophet to shew the great power of the Chaldenas, saith (Hab. 1.10.) They shall scoff at kings, and deride every strong hold. Surely the Lord is so far from esteeming the defences and forces of strength, which men make to, and for themselves, that he scoffs at and derides them. The Lord will deride all the strong holds of man, even the forces of strength. Some get internal carnal Arong holds, to fortifie themselves in, of which the Apostle speaks (2 Cor. 10. 4.). The meapons of our marfare are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the casting down of strong holds. Most sinners are men of wir, they provide themselves strong holds to fave their fins in, they have their excuses and reasonings to defend their fins or themselves in their fins by. Others are men of might, they get external strong holds, they have Armies and Cities of defence, to secure themselves by; but will the Lord regard either? Not the strong holds, set up and maintained by force of wit, no, nor all the forces of frength. Though thou halt Army upon Army, and City upon City, though thou dost add Castle to Castle, and Fort to Forr, they are no more than paper walls before the Lord. As neither riches nor nobleness, so no power of man can fecure man from the hand of God. Mr. Broughton varieth a little from our reading, yet concurrs fully in sense; No gold, nor any other thing should be able to give found frength; which himself expounds by this short gloss. If now thou despisest repentance, thou shalt be utterly cast off. As if he had faid to Job, it is not thy, or any mans standing out against God, that will help you, your only help is in repentance and self-humbling before God. Will he esteem thy riches? no, not gold, nor all the forces of strength.

Hence note;

There is no strength against the Lord.

As there is no counsel, so no force of strength against the Lord. Hannah sang this cruth (1 Sam. 2.9.) By strength shall no man prevail, that is, against man, if God be with him; much more is it true that by strength shall no man prevail against God (Isa. 1.31.) The strong shall be tow, and the maker thereof as a spark; that is, as some expound, their Idols, whom they made their strength, shall be as row, that is, as the most combustible matter, easily confumed, and the maker of it, that is, the Idol-maker, shall be as a spark. Do but blow a spark among tow, and what will become of it? Such are the strongest Idols, in which men trust, and such are the mightyest and strongest men before the Lord, who trust in them. Tow or flax or hemp (after the dreffing) is as tinder, that the least spark will give fire to The strong (idol) shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark; or, which is in effect the same, The strong (man) shall be tow, and that which he bath made, or (as we put in the Margin) his work, that is, his Idol, shall be as a spark, and they shall both burn, or perish together. This is the sentence of the Lord against the strong, a spark shall set them on fire and burn them; how then shall the strong be able to stand before the Lord who is not a spark, but a fire, and that a consuming fire! and therefore, I may urge Elihu's counsel to Job, upon all forts of men, upon those especially who persist in any sin, take heed, because there is mrath, beware, &c. or I may urge them with the Prophets dehortation. (Fer. 9. 23.) Let not the wife man glory in his wisdome, nor the mighty man in his strength, nor the rich man in his riches, for, none of these can help or deliver from wrath, only Jesus Christ can, and it hath been shewed who they are to whom he will not be a delivering ransome. It may be very useful to confider what negatives Eliha puts upon sinners as to deliverance from kindled wrath; not riches, not honour, not crying, not praying, not Arength, not defence can deliver without turning from fin to God, and all in Christ.

Significat re-

Spirare, anho-

vel rei alicu-

jus fummo de-

siderio teneri.

Merc.

Elibu having urged two arguments to make Tob beware of wrath, first, because nothing could ransom him, God regards not riches, no not gold; secondly, because nothing could refcue him, all the forces of strength could not defend him against, nor fetch him out from under the hand of God; Elihu (I say) having dispatched thele two arguments, he in the 20th verse gives a further, and that a third argument to move Job to take heed of wrath, because, as he could neither be ransomed nor rescued, so neither could he be hid or sheltred from the wrath of God. That is the general sense of the next verse.

> Vers. 20. Desire not the night, when people are cut off in their place.

The root of that word which we render defire, fignifies a very earnest breathing and longing after a thing, as conceiving and believing the enjoyment thereof would be an exceeding comfort and refreshment to us. So 'tis used in the seventh Chapter of this book at the second verse; as the servant earnestly desireth the shadow, &c. When a labourer is hot and sweltered almost (as tare, ad aliquid we fay) at his work in the Sun, how earnestly doth he delire the shadow! We say (in the Margine of that place) he gapeth after the shadow. A man, when he is hot, gapes to suck in fresh air. Such an intendment and force there is in this word, defire not, long not for, gape not after

the night,

The night feems not to be a thing, or a feafon so defireable, that we should gape for it or long after it. Solomon saith (Ecol. 11.7.) Surely light is pleasant, and it is a comfortable thing for the eyes to behold the Sun; but who hath a defire after the night? what is the beauty or comeliness of the night that any should so much define it? Why then doth Elibu here forbid Tob (as supposing he did) to desire it? desire not the night.

I answer, the night may be taken two wayes, or under a twofold notion. First properly, as that which casteth a vail or manthe of darkness over both persons and things, and covers them from our fight; in allusion to which, the sense is this; Do not hope to hide or conceal thy felf from the eye or knowledge of God. As thou eanst not be ransomed, as thou canst not be rescued from

his power (which was shewed before) so desire not the night, for thou canst not be obscured from his knowledge under the covert of it, there is no hiding from God. Though I judge that interpretation too gross, which supposeth Elihu count ling Job not to defire the night, as robbers and adulterers, to cover him while doing wickedly, yet possibly he might think feb was not so free to confess the evils which he had done, and therefore rather defined the concealment of them.

Secondly, the night in Scripture, as also in humane Authors, is put improperly for death. All the dead are wrapt up in a night of darkness. Hence that counsel (John 9.4.) Work while you have the day, the night cometh when no man can work. We may work, yea, much work is done in the natural night. It is faid of the vertuous woman (Prov. 31. 18.) Her candle goes not out by night; the and her maids are at work in the night; therefore it cannot be ffrictly meant, that no man can work in the night. The night there is the night of death, or of an extream troublous Ne offices ad life; in these nights, especially in the former, no man can work, illam notion for there is no wisdom, nor device, nor labour in the grave whether (sc. mortis) we are going, (Eccl. 9. 10.) According to this Scripture inter- qua abeum popretation, desire not the night, is desire not death. Fob had put puliadlocum forth fuch defires more than once (Chap. 7.15.) My foul choof- fum. Jun. eth francling and death rather than life Mr. Brown by Gua e media eth strangling and death rather than life. Mr. Broughton translates, tollimitur popu-Breath not unto that night : for peoples paffage to their place : That li in low o ipfois, (saith he) desire not death, the common passage of all men, as rum. Pisc. thou hast done. Therefore Elihu feems here to call Job off from those desires; do not thou peevishly or impatiently (because of the trouble of thy life) call for death, left it come too foon, and it do by thee as it hath done by many others, whom it hath cut off in judgment. So it followes here, Defire not the night,

When people are cut off in their place.

Death is a cutting off. As many die in the night, fo when-ever any die they are cut off from this world, and all the imployments of ir. they are cut off from their dearest stiends and relations. Death cuts off the thread of life, and us from the comforts of this

The Hebrewis, when people ascend. The Original Scripture exprefleth dying by ascending, though the death of the wicked is ra-

ascendere pro excidi & tolli junitur.

Translatio a

candelis, qua-

rum lumen af-

enuntur ipsa.

Verbum Thy ther a descending. It is said by a late Writer concerning the heathen profane and wicked Emperors of Rome, Such a one descended (that is, died) in such a year of his abomination. Now though the wicked descend when they die, yet there is a sence also wherein all men may be said to ascend when they die; and there is no doubt but the godly, as to their more noble part, ascend to God when they die. Thus the word is u'ed in the fifth Chapter of this Book, at the 16th verse, where Eliphaz speaking of the death of a godly man, saith to Job, Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh (or ascendeth) in his season. David deprecated an immature death under this Metaphor (Pfal. 102. 14.) Take me not away in the midft of mine age. The word is, let me not ascend in the midst of mine age, that is, before I have measured the usual course of life. Thus to ascend, is the same with to be sut off; death cuts off the best from this world, and then they ascend to a better. This sense of the words suits well with cendit, aique ita the latter exposition of the night, as taken for the night of death. paulatim confu-The word aftend, is conceived to have in it a double allusion; first, to corn which is taken up by the hand of the reaper, and then laid down on the stubble. Secondly, unto the light of a candle, which as the candle spends, or as that which is the food of the fire is spending, ascends, and at last goes out and vanisheth.

There is yet a surther sense of the whole verse thus; Desire not the night, &c. That is, do not curiously enquire the cause of that divine judgement by which God sometimes sweeps away whole nations, good and bad together, in the night, or suddenly. Or thus, disquiet not thy mind in the night, but rather rest in the will of God, when thou feelt or hearest of those great destructions which come upon persons or nations. Defire net the night, when people are cut off in their place, that is, when they die in, or are removed from the place where they formerly lived and had their abode; in which sense it is said of the dead, their place shall know them no more (Pfal. 103. 16.) How well seever any

are setled, death cuts them off in their place.

First, Forasmuch as Elihu speaking to Job in this distressed estate, withes him not to defire the night,

Sub, Jubrer Jape significat, in loco.

Observe :

In times of distress and trouble we are apt to make many strange wishes, or to express uncouch requests and desires.

The Prophet Feremiah quits himself from this in one point (chap. 17. 16.) I have not defired the woful day (Lord) thou knowest. He was so far from desiring ir, that he prayed for the peace and prosperity of that people; but though Feremy did not defire the evil day to come on others, yet when the evil day was come upon himself we find him venting strange and strong defires of that kind (Chap. 9. 2.) O that my head were a fountain, and mine eyes rivers of tears, that I might weep night and day for the slain of the daughter of my People. He had visions of slaughter, and he did even beg a head melted into water for abundant mourning over that day. But what were his other, what were his further wishes, with respect to himself at that time? we have them in the next verse. O that I had in the milderness a lodging place of a wayfaring man, that I might leave my people, and go from them, for they be all adulterers, a company of treacherous men. What uncomfortable defires had Feremiah as to that day of distress! O how did he cover to have a retiring place, any hole in the wilderness, like a wayfaring man, that he might leave his people and fee them no more, because they were so wicked, and their wickedness he forefaw would bring down such dreadful evils upon them. And as he wisht this sad retirement upon the forelight of evils to come, so we find him in another place (Chap. 20. 14, 15, 16, 50.) withing that he had never been born to see such presnet evils. We have the like plain wish of David, in the day of his trouble (Psal. 55. 2.) Attendunto me (O God) and hear me, I mourn in my consplaint, and make a noise; because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity spon me, and in wrath they hate me (they charged him with evils that he had not done) my heart is fore pained within me, the terrors of death are fallen upon me, fearfulness and trouble are come upon me, and horror bath overwhelmed, or covered me. David was at that time in a very fad day, you fee; and what was his wifh that day? we have it at the 6th verse, And I said, O that I had wings like a dove, for then would I flee away and be at rest; lo then would I wander SIZ

far off and remain in the wilderness. Holy David could not keep his heart (in those distresses) from extravagant wishes. David had the integrity of a dove (as he often pleaded before the Lord) and being diffrest, he wished also for the wings of a dove, that he might flee away, and get out of the reach of all those impendent calamities. How usual is it for good men in bad dayes to breath out fuch withes? one withes that he had never been born, rather than to fee such a day; another wishes he may die prefently, rather than live in such a day. When the Apostle John had given the prophetie of dreadful judgments to come upon the wicked world, or the world of wicked men, he presently tells us what their wishes or desires will be (Rev. 9. 6.) And in those dayes shall men seek death, and shall not find it, and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. Most men flee death, that's a misery ; but death fleeth from some men, and that's a greater misery. They are in the worst of conditions who would have death when death will not be had. Their lives are worse than death who only wish to die. What non-sense wishes and defires had they also in the day of the Lords anger, mentioned in the same book (Chap. 6. 16.) Who said to the mountaines and to the rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that fitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. It is possible for good men sometimes to have strange wishes; but O how lamentable are the wishes of wicked men and unbelievers, who have no part nor interest in Jesus Christ, in those times when Conscience is wounded and awakened, or when a day of the Lords wrath, or judgment from the Lord appeareth! When Christ the Lamb shall sit upon the throne, and call them to give an account, O then they will wish for rocks and mountaines to fall upon them, that they might not appear; how glad will they then be to be hidden with an everlasting night! They cannot but defire the night, who have finned against light. Holy Job could not forbear to desire the night of death in the day of his diffres; what desires then must the wicked have, who have no hope beyond this life !

Again, as to the vanity of that defign of some in desiring the

might for shelter,

Note; There is nothing can cover us from the eye, or secure us from the hand of God.

What

What is darkness to God, who is light, and in whom there is no darkness at all (1 John 1. 5.) Desire not the night. As gold and silver cannot ransom sinners, as great forces, (all the Armies on earth) forces of strength cannot help sinners, so the night cannot hide them; they that are in the grossest darkness, are never the more out of Gods sight; The darkness is not darkness to him, the darkness and the light to him are both alike (Psal. 139.11, 12.) and therefore he laid before (vers. 7.) Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I see from thy presence? If I ascend up to heaven thou art there, &c. Wheresoever we are, God is, who is every where; nothing can keep us off from, or keep us out of the eye of God.

Lastly, as the night, is taken for death; Desire not the night,

Hence note; It is a vain mish to desire death for our rescue, or escape from the evils of this life.

Death is it felf an evil, the worst of natural evils. How can that help us out of our evils of trouble, which is it felf the most troublesom evil? The Lord promiseth some of his people that they should die before the evil day; Fosiah and Hezekiah had such promites: 'Tis a favour to die (as they did) in the affurance of eternal life, before we feel the evils of this life. But death, conadered in it felf, is no relief against evil; and as it is the worst of natural evils in it felf, so it carrieth those who are unprepared and unprovided for it, to worfer evils than any they can meet with in this life. Some defire death to escape the evils of this life, when, as foon as they die, they go to the evils of another life, which are the second death, such a death as hath no second, and descend not only to the grave, but to hell. And what hath any one got by leaving the troubles of this life, to fall into the dolors of that second secondless death! They only dream of security by death, who are unprepared to die. Death is good for none but those who are fitted for, and have by faith laid hold upon eternal life.

J O B, Chap. 36. Verf. 21.

Verse. 21. Take heed, regard not iniquity, for this thou hast chosen rather than affliction.

Cuflodroit,

In this verse Elihu gives fob another serious admonition, or re-enforcest the former, warning him to take heed of speaking or uttering any thing rashly, unduely, or unbecomingly of God, in respect of his troubles and sufferings; and this he urgeth upon him by two sorts of arguments, as will appear when I come

to handle the two following verses. Take heed, regard not inniquity. As if he had said, beware, be well advised what thou dost, and what thou sayest. The word which we here render take heed, fignifies to keep and preferve, but most properly, to prevent and keep off any evil, that it fall not upon us. The noun, from this root, fignifies a watch tower, upon which a person stands to observe and give warning of any danger, or to descry any approaching enemy. Tis translated, take beed, as here, so (1 Kings. 2. 4.) where David upon his death-bed, gives counsel to Solomon his ion and successor what to do, and how to walk in the way of the Lord, that (saith he) the Lord may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, if thy children take heed to their mayer, that is, if they are very watchful over their wayes, both as to their personal and princely walkings, if they walk in my statutes, then I will do thus and thus for them. Thus saith Elihu, take heed, look about you, have your eyes in your head, be careful. These take heeds are frequent in Scripture. From whence (before I come to the matter about which Elibs would have Job take heed.)

Observe; It is our duty to be heedful.

We cannot be dutiful unless we are heedful; a headless person cannot be a faultless person. This duty runs quite through all we have to do; take heed, first, to the inward motions of the soul, take heed how & what you think (Pro.4.23.) keep thy heart with all diligence (with all keepings, with all heedings, it is this word in the text) heed

heed thy heart, that is, thy first stirrings and motions unto any work. Secondly, take heed, as to the first motions of the soul, so to the affections of the foul, which are foul-motions formed up and stated; take heed of your affections, how and what you defire, how and what you love, how and what you hate. Thirdly, take heed to the tongue, how you speak, and what you speak, where you speak, and why or for what ends you speak; there is a great deal of take heed belonging to the tongue. Fourthly, take heed to the ear, when ye hear others speak, take heed how you hear, and when ye hear, and what you hear; infection may foon come in at those ports. Fifthly, take heed to the eyes, what you behold; the eyes are windowes which often let in vanity, yez, I may fay, venome and poyfor into the foul. (In a word, take heed of all your actions, or of your whole conversa ion; take heed what you do, and how you do it; see that ye walk circumspectly, take heed in and about all Averboard these things, that ye sin not, especially, that ye neither have, nor quod sape anicarry on any defign or work that is finful; take heed that ye be not wel contemplafound falling into that errour, to avoyd which, Elihu calleth or a- tionem valet wakeneth Job to this watchfulness, take heed.

Regard not iniquity.

Here is the special matter in the rext, about which Elibu ad- vel adjudicanvises Fob to be heedful, regard not iniquity. The word rendred dum. Bold. regard, fignifies the turning of the face to look upon any object; that which we much regard, we turn about to look upon it, as Iniquitas, vathat which we flight, we turn away from it and will not look upon it; we turn our face to a perfon or thing, fignifying our approbation, and we turn away our face to shew our dislike; and probation, and we turn away our face to they our dillike; and an authorithment do well express this word, which signifies to turn the da, indecentia. face, by regarding; turn not thy face to iniquity, look not to it, Sept. give it not any respect or countenance, regard not.

Iniquity.

The word fignifie vanity properly. All iniquity is vanity, fin is vanity, and fin hath brought vanity into the whole creation, yea fin makes all things a vexation to us. The Chaldee fai h, regard not a lie, the Septuagint, regard not things abfurd or unsomly.

But what Iniquity doth Elihu here chiefly intend? I answer,

ad aliquem finem, utpote ad miserandum, vel

It is a truth of Iniquity in general, regard not any iniquity; yet here Elihu speaks not in that compass; as if he should say, regard not robbery, regard not murder, regard not adultery and wantonness, regard not any of these foul and gross fins; but there was a special sin which Elihu had an aym ar, and which he thought Fob gave too much regard unto; regard not iniquity, that is, undue speeches and heart-g udgings, or impatient complainings against the proceedings of God with thee; that is, do not stand so much complaining about what thou sufferest, and justifying thy self in what thou hast done, expostulate the matter no more with God, with not for the night of death, &c. This is to regard or turn thy face to iniquity; take heed of these things, do not regard these evils, this kind of iniquity.

Further, when Elihu faith regard not iniquity, we are to expound him by these effirmatives; flight it, turn from it, abhor it, leath it, despise it, rejett it; all these affirmatives are contained in that negative, regard not. Frequently in Scripture, negatives intend their contrary affirmatives. When that Scripture faith, despise not prophesting, (1 Thes. 5.) the meaning is, se shall regard it, love ir, follow ir, delight in it; so on the other hand, when this Scripeurcosaith, regard not iniquity, the meaning is, despise and oppose iniquity to the utmost; Take heed, regard not iniquity. From

this part of the verse thus opened,

Observe, First: It is no easte matter to keep our selves right raben things seem to go wrong with us.

It is a hard thing to forbear iniquity when we are pinched with adverfity; not to speak unduely and uncomly, not to speak amis of God, not to speak unbecoming our selves, require great caution in a day of distress. We have need to take heed of this iniquity, to be warchful in an evil day, that we neither do nor fay that which is evil. When things are amiss with us, we are very apt to speak and do amis. As soon as ever the hand of God toucheth us, how do we grieve! how do we complain! how do we murmur! how do we repine! O regard not this, 'ris an iniquity to be taken heed of, in a dark day, in a day of trouble, fuch as was upon Job; as black a day was upon him, as ever upon any in the world, as to his personal condition. If such a Cedar failed, have

not we, poor Shrubs, reason to look about in such a day? When an affliction is very great, they that are for reputation great and strong in faith, very choice believers, experienced souldiers in the wars of Jesus Christ (when an affliction (1 say) growes very great) how apt are they to be dismayed, to be out of heart, to despond, to look upon themselves as undone, and all undone! O regard not, turn from this iniquity. It should not satisfie any servant of God that he avoids gross iniquities in practise, he must make conscience of an impatient word, and order his speech aright under the rod, as well as his conversation.

Secondly, Forasmuch as Elibucalls this an iniquity,

Chap. 36.

Observe; Impatient speeches render su guiley, let our afflictions and troubles be never so great.

Jobs affliction was as heavy as the land, yet Eliba tells him, your complainings are your iniquity. I have had occasion feveral times in this book to speak of the evil of complaining, under the worst and sorest of afflictions, and therefore I only name it here.

Thirdly, taking iniquity in the largest notion,

Observe; Sin deserves no respect from us.

Sinners deserve no respect, much less doth fin. Tis one part of the character which David gives of a Citizen of Sion, (Pfal. 15. 4.) He is one, in whose eyes a vile person (that is, a wicked person, a person given up to his lusts) is contemned. That which makes a person vile and contemptible, is worse than a vile person, and therefore should have less respect, or more contempt from us. Remember, fin is the only thing which makes any person vile: should we then give any respect to sin? should we give respect to that which brings utter difrespect upon us? have we any reason to honour that which brings us to shame? to regard that which makes us regardless both with God and all good men? However some men are regarded with men for their wickedness, I mean with wicked men (they regard their like the more, when they are most like them) yet (I say) sin makes every man regardless with God and every good man: Therefore regard it not, yea, flight it, trample upon it. Take that

TE

For

For a Fourth note in the affirmative;

Iniquity is utterly to be difregarded and abominated;

We should abhor it and cast it out of our soules, we should throw it out of our conversation.

Note Fifthly; To regard iniquity is the marke of a wicked man.

As 'tis his property to difregard all good (Pfa. 26.4.) he feteth not his heart to that which is good, he abborreth not evill; that is, he hath no regard to the good of duty, and he hath a great regard to the evill of iniquity. His not abhorring evill is to be interpreted in the affirmative, he regards, respects evil, he prizes and values his very basest lusts before the Law and Will of God. David disclaimeth this base spirit (Pf 66.18.) If I regard iniquity is my heart, God will not hear my prayers. Now who are they whose prayers God will not hear? We have the answer made by the blind man (70h. 9.) God heareth not sinners : whom will he hear then, seeing all are sinners? His meaning is, he hears not impenitent finners, unbelieving finners, fuch as trade on in a way of fin. Thus David concluded, if I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear me; for if Iregard iniquity, I am of those sinners whose prayers God will not hear. Though David had done great iniquities, and had much iniquity in his heart, yet he regarded no iniquity in his hear, If I have locked to any iniquity in my heart (faith he) as the word is; that is, if iniquity in my heart be smiled upon, if I have pleased my self with it, if I have given it a good look, I were a wicked man, and God heareth not such.

Lastly, from these words, Elihu speaking thus to Job, a godly

man, take beed, regard not iniquity,

A godly man should take heed of doing any thing which may signifie the least respect or regard unto fin, the least respect to the least fin.

Indulge not thy felf in complainings and impatience, lest thou be found to regard iniquity, as Job is here charged in the next

For this then hast chosen rather than afflittion.

Here

Here Elibs applieth the matter yet closer to Job; I have advised thee, to take beed, not to regard iniquity, and my admenition is not without cause; I do not speak at random, for I tell thee plainly, thou hast chosen this rather than affliction; that is, thou

hast regarded iniquity. To choose is to regard. This thou hast chosen rather than affliction. This, What? This fin, impatient complaining and expollulating with God, this fin thou hast chosen. The word which we translate to choose, de- Elegit, selegit. notes a very ferious and exact work of the foul. Choice is a deliberate act; we choose upon discussion and debate; choice made upon trial and proof. Thus the word is used (Exod. 17. 9.) foshua was to take chosen, approved, experienced men, to go to the war against Amalek. David gathered all the chosen men of Israel (2 Sam. 6. 1.) And thus the Lord spake to the house of faceb by the Prophet (Isa. 43. 10.) I have chosen thee; Where? I have chosen thee in the fire of affliction. Affliction is a tryer, and either discovers who are fit to be chosen, or fits and prepares them to be chosen. This then hast chosen

Rather than affliction.

Chap. 36.

But may we say that 706 sat down, and putting his affliction in one ballance and fin in another, chose iniquity rather than affliction, or fin rather than suffering? Surely the bent of Fobs spirit, the frame of his heart was far otherwise; nor is it confiftent with a gracious stare, or a state of grace, to fit down and make a perfect election of any fin, upon any rearms whatfoever. Therefore the word choofing may be taken in a milder sence, or in a more moderate intendment; as if Eliba had faid, Thou hast spoken and done such things, thou hast behaved thy self so under thine afflictions, as that a man may say, surely thou hast chosen iniquity rather than affliction; then hast given others great cause to judge thus of thee. Elibu did not purpose 10 fasten this upon 706, that he had purposely concluded to choose fin rather than affliction; but he Præ afflictiohad taken liberty (through the violence of his temptations and ne .i.e. magin the extreamity of his paines) to use such impatient speeches and guam affination nem, boxest actings as might be interpreted, in a sence, a choosing of iniquity tolerantiam af-(that is, impatience) rather than affliction; that is, a quiet fuf- fiftionis. ferance of affliction. This thou hast chosen rather than affliction, or, Meton) mia (As some render it) For this cause hast thou chosen any thing subjecti. Pisc.

rather than affl Elion, thou half choien what came next rather than affliction; or, thou hast chosen this because of thine affliction, so others read it; that is, thou half been so prest with thine affli-

ction and trouble, that thou carest not what thou chusest.

Mr. Broughton thus; Beware thou lack not to forrow, to shoofe that for thy affliction. The lumme of all is, as if Elikuhad thus bespoken fob in this part of the verse; O. Fob, whereas God requires of thee to give him glory in the humble submiffion of thy foul anto him, and sitting patiently under his mighty hand, thou hast behaved thy self quite otherwise, thou hast carried it stoutly, and uttered very bitter complainings of thy condition, thou hast not given God the glory of his soveraignty, of his holiness, justice, purity and goodness, in thy affliction, thou hast not set thy self to do this as then shouldest, but thou bast run out exceedingly, and overshot thy self; So that, I may even say of thee, then hast chose this iniquity, rather than submitted to thy affliction.

Elihu speakes reprovingly, this thom hast chosen; Is this a

good choice ?

Hence note, First;

Singor that which is finful, ought not to be chosen what soever

me choofe.

As Solomon counseleth, in the book of Proverbs, with all thy gettings get understanding, he meanes spiritual understanding ; as if he had faid, What-ever thou are getting be sure thou get wisdoms for thy fonl, wisdom to salvation, wisdom for eternity; in all thy gettings get understanding : So I may say in this place, among all your choosings be sure you never choose sin; that's not to be chosen, leave that out, or pass that by in all your elections. This is a point of very large compais; it fuits not my work here, to infift much upon it, yet I shall take leave a little ; What ever you choofe, choofe not sin. Why?

First, Sin is evil in it self, and that which is (malum in fe) evil in it felf, or evil it felf, is not the object of choice; no man

is to choose evil, nor properly can choose it.

Secondly, Choose not fin, for fin is an evil forbidden, the Law

is against ir, and the Gospel too.

Thirdly, Choose not sin, for sin is a dishonour to God, and we

should rather choose to die than dishonour God,

Fourthly, Choose not fin, for it brings destruction upon man. Sim Sin Arietly and abstractly considered cannot properly be chosen. A rational creature cannot choose fin properly, because fin is evil; and election being the office of the Will, whose adaquate object is good, fin, strictly taken, cannot be chosen. But fin is often chosen, and tis the choice of most men, they choose iniquity the ther than affliction; iniquity is the choice and the beloved of many a mans foul. But how? It is under the pretence of fomething that is good; no man can choose it as 'tis evil. For though some love fin and choose fin for fins fake (such come up highest and nearest to the frame of the devil, as they that do good for goods fake come nearest to the holy Angels) yet, I say, fin is alwayes chosen under some consideration or shadow of good; and if any man choose to an without respect to profit or gaine, yet he hath some good in his eye, namely to please himself, he would have his will, and will not let God have his will; and this is good to him who is starke naught. But usually fin is chosen upon one of

these three accounts.

First, sin is very often chosen (by a mistake) for that which is good. They who (asthe Apostle speaks, Heb. 5.12.) are un-skilful in the word of righteonsness, they who have not sences exercifed to discern between good and evil, are very apt to choose evil in stead of good, that is, thinking it to be good. Thus error in opinion is chosen, upon a mistake, for truth; and iniquity in pra-Rise, is chosen, upon a mistake, for duty. Of such the Prophet speakes (Isa. 5. 20.) They call evil good, and good evil, they put darkness for light, and light for darkness: which, as some do knowingly, out of perverseness of spirit; so others ignorantly, our of unfoundness of judgement, imagining that to be good which is evil, and that to be light which is nothing else but darkness, that to be found doctrine which is errour, and that holy worthip which is superstition. So did Paul before he was converted, he chose iniquity, and thought he had done very well; I thought (faith he) I ought to do many things against the name of fesus Christ (Acts 26.) I thought it my duty, I verily thought I ought to persecute and vex those who beleeved in Jesus, where-ever I found them. And Jesus Christ himself forewarns his Disciples (John 16. 2.) that the time was coming that who sewer killed them would think they did God service. Thus many do not understand what is right, and so choose what is wrong.

Secondly,

Secondly, Others choose that which is evil, hoping that some good will come of it, that God may have some glory by it, and men themselves and others may have some advantage by it. This reproach was cast upon the Apostles and their doctrine, which St. Paul rejected with highest disdain (Rom. 3.8.) Not as we are flandersufly reported, and as some affirm, that we say, let us do evil that good may come thereof, whose damnation is just. The glory of the free grace of God will be manifested in the pardoning of our fin, come therefore (fay some) let us fin our fill, that so the immeasurableness of the Lords goodness and mercy may appear. Woe to those who make such inferences, their damnation is just. To do evil upon any hopes of good by it (though it be the glory of God) subjects to the worst evil of suffering, damnation. Others choose sin; Why? They look some good will come by it, that is, some profit. If we Arain our consciences to do this, we may get or keep favour with men; if we do this evil, it may gain us acceptance in the world. Many choose evil, because in doing so, they swimwith the stream, and comply with the many, or as the Apostle speakes, with the course of this world; these choose evil, because they would be in the fashion of the most, they confider which way the world is like to go, and fet themselves to go thatway.

Thirdly, Others do evil hoping to avoid and escape danger by it; they choose the evil of sin, that they may escape the evil of punishment. As many fin for a little advantage, so others to avoid loss, and that they may sleep in a whole skin. Some will deny what they have done, to fave themselves : No body can prove it against us, we will deny it, and so avoid trouble, and keep out of the reach of danger. Yea, for this cause many deny the truth and renounce the wayes of God, in which they have walked. Demas forfook Paul, he left the Church of God, that he might keep in with, and close to the world. Upon these pretences and hopes many choose evil, not meerly and barely in it self, but as it comes thus clothed: As some choose it through ignorance, so others upon hopes of getting good, and not a few upon hopes of avoiding evil, and keeping out of hazzard and harmes-way. But what-ever worldly good any gain, or danger they escape, by choosing iniquity, that choice brings them into greater danger, and subjects

them to the loss of a greater good.

This thou hast chosen rather than affliction. The particular mi-

Hence note;
He that gives himself up to unquietness and impatience under the afflicting hand of God, chooses sin rather than affliction.

The Lord by Moses told his People, when they should be brought into great tribulation, because of their sin and uneven walkings, because of their breaking the Lords Statutes and Commandments (Lev. 26.41.) If they shall accept of the punishment of their Iniquity, then it shall be well with them. If at such a time ye stand not complaining and murmuring against me, but shall well accept or take the punishment kindly, and kiss the Rod, acknowledging how you have provoked me, and walked unworthy of former mercy; then I will shew you savour, and renew your mercies: But if in affliction you fall a murmuring, and say, surely the Lord bath cast us quite off, there's no hope, you chuse iniquity rather than affliction.

Thirdly, Elihu in this doth not only reprove Job for doing that which was very evil in it self, but he reproves him for doing that which was very evil to himself; this thou hast chosen rather than affliction. As if he had said, Thou dost not know thine own good, in making this choyce. We say, He is a wife man

that understands his own good.

Hence note ;

They make a very bad and miserable choyce for themselves, who chuse inequity rather than affliction.

Thus Solomon concludes for Wisdom (Prov. 8.36.) He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul. He that sinneth, wrongs Christ, but Christ patieth that over, and seemeth to say, I will bare your wrongs, but pray take heed to your selves, will you not love your selves? will you not abstain from sin out of love to your selves? he that sinneth against me wrongs his own soul; all that hate me (that is, my wayes) they love death: And surely there is no great beauty in death, that we should love it and defire it. They chuse very ill for themselves, that chuse sin, the wages whereof is death. I grant, to chuse affliction is but a hard choyce (affliction

fliction is not good in it felf) but affliction, if chosen, may prove good; it may be very good to us, it may bring in much good to us: and therefore there is wisdome, not only in chusing any affliction, rather than fin, but in chusing some one affliction rather than another. But what good doth he chuse, that chuses sin? Happy is the man that endures correction, or affliction, faith the Scripture in many places; but doth it say any where, Happy is the man that commits iniquity? If you chuse affliction rather than iniquity, you chuse a great deal of good. First, David could say upon tryal (Pfal. 119.71.) It is good for me that I have been afflitted. that I might learn thy statutes. Did ever David say, it is good for me that I have finned, which is to unlearn or break Statutes? did he ever please himself in thinking that he had sinned? he did even please himself that he had been afflicted; that was good, because he learned Commandments by it; he grew a better Scholler, then he was in that best learning of all, the knowledgeof the Commandments of God:

Again, Secondly, It is good to be afflicted; why? afflictions are the exercises of our Graces, the exercise of our Faith, the exercise of our patience, the exercise of our self-denyal. 'Tis a good thing to have our Graces exercised, for thereby they are encreased. If you chuse affliction, you shall probably have that good by it, the encrease of your best things, your Graces.

Thirdly, Affliction purgeth out our corruptions, and that is good. Is it not good to have a disease, or an ill humour, purged out? this good comes by affliction. But doth the committing of sin purge sin? doth the Stock of sin abate by sinning? does the ill humour spend it self? no, the ill humour rather increaseth. When you chuse sin, you weaken your Graces, and cherish your corruptions; but when you refuse sin, your corruptions weaken or spend their strength. Do you think when you have committed one sin, that the soul is made more unable to, or more averse from the same or another sin? When you have satisfied the call of one lust, will it now let you alone, and call no more? no, not at all; the more you sin, the more you may; the more you sin, the more doth the Stock of sin increase and grow in you.

Fourthly, Affl ction is a means to take us off or wean us from the World: O what a good is that! we being so apt to dote

upon it. The fin of the Age is, falling in love with the World; therefore it may be good for us to be foundly afflicted, that we may be weaned from the World, and from all things in the world, and be kept, where our true interest is, in the bosom of Chairt, or close to him. But if you chuse iniquity, will that take you off from the World? no; the more fin, the more love of the World; for fin and the World are akin, they are of a Blood; therefore the more you have to do with the one, the more you will have to do with the other.

Fifthly, Affliction brings us nearer to God. That which takes us off from the World, brings us neerer to God: this is an excellent advantage, a great good of affliction. But chuse sin, and will that bring us neerer to God? Sin is a departure from God: The Lord saith to sinners, Te are departed and gone. Sin is so far from bringing us nearer to God, that as all in a flate of fin, are far off from God, so every act of fin widens the distance, and

puts usfarther off from Cod.

Sixthly, Affliction is our conformity to Christ. If you chuse affliction, you chuse that which makes you look like Christ; for he was a man of forrows in this world, he was not in the ruff and jollity, in the power and pomp of this world, but low, and of no reputation, acquainted with grief all his dayes. If then you chuse affliction rather than fin, you chuse conformity to Christ; but chusing iniquity rather than affliction, you take up the utmost disformity to Christ, who knew no sin, nor was any guite found in his mouth. He took all our afflictions upon him, but he would not touch our sio, as a doer of ir, only as (in our flead) a sufferer for it.

How great is the good of affliction! But is there any good at all in fin? Upon all these considerations the Apostle saith, When God, the Fathe of spirits, afflicts his sons and daughters, he doth ic for their profit, that they may be partakers of his holinels (Heb. 12. 10, 11) The Lord afflicts us for our profit, but he doch not fay I have let you fin for your profit: For though the Lord is able to, and often doth, b ing good out of fin, yet not instrumentally, but occasionally. Therefore the Scripture attributes no profit to sin, but speaking of sin, it saith, What fruit have ye of those things whereof ye are now ashamed (Rom. 6.21.) shew your gain; what are your advantages? what the revenues which your lufts have

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have brought in? what have you got by your malice, by your wrath, by your conformity and compliance with the world? have these brought you in any advantage? are you bettered by them? what fruit have you of those things, whereof you are now ashamed ? Let us therefore often confider Mofes's choyce (Heb. 11. 25.) Moses was a wise and a holy man; and what did he? He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Herein try your spirits. Christ fer two things before Moles; Come, Moles, here's affliction, you must be afflicted, and afflicted with the people of God (which are the greatest afflictions, you shall be sure to be lashed with the smartest sourcest Rod in their Company) or here is Egypt, and all the contentments that fin can give; which will you have Moses? O give me afflictions with the people of God (faid Mafes) Let the world ruffle and rant in the pleasures of fin for a season, for my part I will have affliction, O give me affliction. In this choyce Moses approved himself a wise man, and understood his good. So did the Martyrs. Come, will you have a pisson, or deny Christ? a Halter, or forsake the Faith? will you into this fire, or will you commit that iniquity? O fay they, give us Prisons, Halters, Fires, rather than conform to your wickedness. Remember this Point, this is a needful Point for us atall times. I would adde these three things surther about it. Chuse affliction rather than fin; why?

First, Because sin is worse than all affliction. Secondly, Because sin is the Sting of all affliction. If you are in an afflicted condition, and your consciences tell you you have been base, vile, complying with the VVorld, and dissembling or salse-hearted with God; if your hearts tell you, you have been rotren at the heart, this will be the sting of your afflictions. What is the sting of death? The Apostle answers (1 Cor. 15. 56.) The sting of death is sin, Would a man chuse a sting? Surely you chuse a sting when you chuse sin, and that which will afflict you beyond all your

afflictions.

Thirdly, Sin is worse than efficient, for when God would declare his severest weath, and being the greatest affiction upon the children of men, when he resolves to affict a person or a people to the utmost, he doth not say, I will make this man a poor man, or I will send plague, or sickness, or samine among this people,

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but he faith, I will deliver him or them up into the hands of their fins, or to the power of their lults. (Pfal. 81. 11.) Ifrael would none of me (faith the Lord) they were doy, they had other lovers, they would have the world, they chose sin, rather than God, and to go a whoring after the creature, rather than keep close to him. What then? So I gave them up to their own hearts lufts. As if the Lord had faid, Pray take your comfe, you that love your own inventions, take your fill of them, you that love and would have the vanities of the world, take your fill of them. The Lord doth not threaten them with famine and pestilence, no nor with hell, but he threatens them with fin, and leaves them to the power of iniquity. Thus he gave up the old Genile Romans to vile affections, (Rom. 1. 26, 28.) Let them be victorious, let them be rich, let them subdue all Nations under their iron hands, let Rome be the Head and Mistresse of the world, and command all people, let all stoop to their power, but taith God, I will give them up to vile affections, they shall be basely Idelacrous, and basely wanton, and bately glurrenous, and bafely drunken, and bafely ambitious, and basely envious: As they were above all people of the world in outward glory and power, to God left them under the power of their lusts, and gave them up to glut themselves with wickedness; He gave them up to a reprobate minde, to do things that are not convenient. 'Tis the most terrible of all afflictions, when God makes a fin an affliction, and gives men up to hardness of heart, to pride, to a spirit of loosness and wantonness; here is a mischief indeed, the mischief of fin.

Laftly, Observe;

Our Averdance of, or escape from the greatest affiction in the world, will not bear us out in the choyce of any iniquity.

We may understand and prosecute this poynt two wayes.

First, As to guilt. It will no way excuse us before God, to fay, I forbore to do duty when commanded by God, I did evill because commanded by man, not out of any dislike of my duty, or liking of iniquity, but only to avoyd those afflictions, which I faw inevitably falling upon me, in case I had either done the one, or not done the other. This plea will not hold before God, for U u 2

any mans discharge from guilt upon either account. And though there may be some seatons wherein a duty may be said by or omitted, yet there is no season wherein any iniquity may be chosen or committed.

Secondly, We cannot be excused, as to Discretion. We are fools, and act below, not only gracious but rational men, if we chuse iniquity to avoyd any affliction, whether that affliction or suffering, be, first, our own; or secondly, the suffering of others. First, though nearly related, & very near to us, wise, children, &c. Secondly, though many, never so many, a whole Nation, a whole world, the Church. I believe that affertion of St Augustine will be found sound and Orthodox Divinity; Better let the world pe-

rish, than attempt to save it by telling an officious ly.

The evil of fin is so bad that if any good could come by it (which of it self cannot) it were not worth the having: Some said in the Apostles times, & they said it of the Apostles, (Rom. 3. 8.) Let us do evil that good may come of it. God by his infinite power, wisdome, and goodness, brought good out of evil, even salvation to man out of the sall of the first man; but if any man, or fort of men, shall project the obtainment of good by the doing of evil, the Apostle in the same place hath given them this doom, Their damnation is just; nothing is more just or righteous, than their damnation, who hope to get good for themselves or others, by doing evil, which is it self injustice and unrighteousness.

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J O B, Chap. 36. Verf. 22, 23.

22. Behold, God exalteth by his power: who teacheth like him?

23. Who hath enjoyned him his way? or who can Say, thou hast wrought iniquity?

IN these two verses Elihu prosecuteth the admonition which he had given Fob in the 21 verse, to take heed of uttering any thing rashly concerning Gods dealings with him, or, of choosing iniquity rather than affliction: And he presseth the admonition by two great arguments.

First, From the power and wisdome of God, in the 22th verse; Behold, God exalteth by bis power : who teacheth like him?

Secondly, He urgeth it by an argument taken from the foveraignty of God, as also from his most exact Justice, (v. 23.) Who hath enjoyned him his way? or who san say, thou hast wrought iniquity? As if he had faid, Take heed how thou accusest the Justice of God in any of his dealings with thee: If God be of such power, of Such misdome, of such soveraignty, of such integrity, then consider well what thou speakest, yea what thou thinkest of God; beware thou speakest not a word, nor conceivest a thought amiss of him. Consider, I say, God himself, his wayes, and works, thoroughly, and thou wilt conclude with me, That though many in the world have great power, and have left the markes of it in many places, and upon many persons; yet none like God, either, first, in doing his own work, or secondly, in directing or teaching us how to do ours.

So that Elihu by this report and commendation of the power and wisdome of God, seems to comfort Job in the assurance or hope of better things, if he would hearken to and accept his coun- Ecce, dem exsel; for as God had mightily afflicted and broken him, so he was celsus in fortias mighty to heal those breaches, and deliver him; he only waited vulg to fee him in a better frame, that he might be gracious, (1/a. 30. 2000) cocet-18.) That's the general fum of the words.

Vers. 22. Behold, God exalteth by his power.

Some read, God is high in his own power; that carrieth Eliha's robore suo ex-

Sus est, intransitive sami poieft; anollitrobur suum,i.e. reason celsus est.

reason frongly in it, God is exalted in his power above all others; and therefore it is no way sutable or consentaneous unto reason, that the greater power should be questioned, much less condemned of injustice by the lesser power: There must be a parity, a coordination, or a co-equality at least, if not a superiority, where judgement is given. That's a great truth, God is exalted in his own

David (Pfal. 21. 13.) turns it into a prayer, or with, Be thou exalted, O Lord, in thine own ftrength. He makes a like prayer, (Pfal. 108. 5.) The Lord in other places declareth himself peremptorily in it, (Pfal. 46.10.) Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the Heathen, I will be exalted in the Earth. It shall be so whether men will or will not; whether men will or no, God will be exalted, because he is exalted in his own power, not in any derived power, or power given him from the creature, Men or Angels. The power which God puts forth in his works exalt him, or shew him to be a great, a mighty God. Behold, God is exalted by his own power.

But we translate the Text (and so I conceive it more fitly sures the scope of Elihu) as expressing an act of God towards others; Behold, God exalteth by his power. So Mr Broughton; Mark, the

Omnipotent sets up by his strength.

Behold :

(As hath been shewed) is a note both of attention and admiration.

God.

The strong God, she potent, the omnipotent God, who is able to overcome all difficulties,

Exalteth;

inconciss um reddere.

The word which we render to exalt, fignifieth to fet in an in-Elevare, exal- accessible height, or to exalt very high; and not only so, but to eare, corrobora- establish in that exaltation, yea so to confirme and corroborate him that is fet up in such a height, that no power is able to molest, trouble, or afflict him; and therefore a word coming from this root signifieth a fortified Castle or Tower; such places, if any, are exalted and lifted up on high, Behold, God exalteth; As if Elihu

had said, God is not only exalted in himself, he is not only lifted up beyond the reach of all creature-annoyances, but he is able to lift up others; and he doth actually exalt his when he pleaseth, beyond the reach of all danger, beyond the hurtfull power of those who hate them, and therefore have a mind to hurt them. God is so exalted above others, that he can exalt others also. He exalteth by

His Power;

He hath the power in himself. The word which we render power, signifieth,

First, That might and strength which is corporal, the might

and strength of the body.

Secondly, Inward might and strength, whether acquired or in-

fused, the might of the mind, wisdome and pollicy.

Thirdly, Civil might and power, honour and riches. Whatever maketh a man strong, comes under the notion of this word; and every way, in all the Notions of power, God is exalted. He exalteth by his power.

But seeing 'cis barely afferted (He exalteth by his power) nothing being expressed, it may be questioned, whom doth he exalt? or what doth he exalt? I answer, Forasmuch as the Scripture leaveth it at large, and undetermined, we may apply this affertion to any, either thing or person. God exalteth whom he pleaseth, and what he pleaseth. VVe may take it distinctly these five wayes.

First, He exalteth Himself by his power; that is, he exalteth his own Name and Glory, which is nearest to him, yea, as him-

felf.

Secondly, He exalteth every work which he will undertake and engage upon: He doth not only lay the Foundation of his work, and rear up the VValls a little way, but he exalteth by his power till he hath fet up the Head-fione of his work (as the Prophet Zechariah speaketh, Chap. 4.7.) all that love and fear him shouting and crying, Grace, Grace, to it. (He exalteth his works of Providence, as once he did his work of Creation, to full perfection.

Thirdly, The Lord exalteth those that fear him, for they are most properly his Favourites; and whom should he exalt but those whom he savoureth? All the worldly exaltations of evili

men, are but depressions and abasements, compared with those exaltations and advancements which God intendeth for all that

fear him; and some he exalter much in this VVorld.

Fourthly, and more specially, He exalteth by his power (such Job then was) those that are cast down by the oppressing power of men, even the poor, and those that have no help. Thou art he (saith David, Psal. 9. 13.) that liftest me up (or exaltest me) from the gates of death. When I am perishing, when I am ready to be swallowed up with death, when I am at the greatest loss, even as to life it self, then thou listest me up, thou listest me up from the very gates of death. Again, (Psal. 18. 48.) He delivereth me from mine enemies, yeathou listest me up above those that rise up against me: When they are casting me down, God is exalting and raising me up. And if God will raise up, who can keep down?

Fifthly, We may take the words in this general sense; Whosoever is exalted in this world, God exalteth him. The Sparrow
cannot fall to the ground, nor the least thing or person be listed
from the ground, but by the hand of God. As he exalteth some
in a way of special savour, so he exalteth the worst of men in a way
of common providence: As none can be exalted if he say, no;
God is able to put a barr or a stop to any mans exaltation; so he
can exalt whom he will, and none are able to put a barr or a stop
to their exaltation. Beheld, God exalteth by his power.

Hence Note;
God is able to exalt any person, how sow soever brought, how much soever despised.

Eliba spake this purposely to Job, who was in a low condition, brought (as it were) to the very gates of death; and he makes this large description of the power of Cod in exalting those that are cast down, purposely to comfort Job, to erect his spirit, and cheare his heart, with a blessed considence, that how much soever he was at present under-foot, or under-hatches, yet he might hope for better things, even to be listed up, if he humbled himself under the mighty hand of God. (Psai. 9.9.) The Lord will be a refage, (the word in the Text answers this) or an high place, for the oppressed. Places of refuge are usually high places, and therefore the same Hebrew word significant both an high place

and a place of refuge, (Pfal. 109. 41.) He setteth the poor on high from affillion, and maketh him families like a flock. The Prophet (1/a, 33, 16.) Having spoken of the man that walketh in his integrity, tels us how it shall be with him, He shall dwell on high: The word is, He shall dwell in the high places, that is, he shall dwell in God, who is most high, for evermore; God will exalt him even to as much safety, as himself is in; his place of defence shall be the munition of Rocks; bread shall be given him, his water Particeps erit divina faliciskall be sure; He shall be housed with God, yea housed in God, tatis, atg; conhe shall be fed by God, he shall lodge under his roof, and fit (as fors testi as it were) at his Table, he shall have bread enough, and water monfa. enough, and both fure enough.

And if the Lord exaltern thus by his power. let none be difcouraged in their afflictions and castings down. The Lord alone is sufficient, yea allsufficient; and he exalteth not only by his will. that is, he hath not only a will to exalt, but he exalteth by his power, that is, he hath power enough to exalt whom he will. What power soever is in the creature, 'tis the Lords power; 'cis a stream from his Ocean, and when the Lord is pleased to remove all power from the creature, he hath a sufficient reserve of power in himself, or in his own hand, by which he can command deliverance, yea exaltation. Therefore do not speak either despondingly or desparingly, as if all hope were gone, when at any time all humane power is gone; for God exalteth by his (own)

power; and as it followeth in the Texr,

Who teacheth like him?

As if Eliku had said, God is not good only at acting, but he is good at instructing, and he is best at both. He is best or beyond all in power; He is best or beyond all in wisdome and under-

Randing, and therefore who teachethlike him?

At the 13th verse of this Chapter, we have the substance of what is here afferted, and so upon the matter, 'tis but the same thing repeated; there it is, He delivereth the poor; here, He exalteth by his power; There 'cis said, He openeth their ear to in-Struction ; here, Who teacheth like him? The words are a divine chalenge, Who teacheth like him? Bring forth the man, bring forth the Angel that can. The word which here we render, to teach, in its first sense signifieth to cast a Dart, Favelin, or Stone. Verbum 77 commune ad pluviam, et ad funditur et excolitur animus ad fr. Aus bonorum operum. תורה

It fignifieth also to raine, and so the raine which fals from heaven, because that is as it were, cast from the clouds to the earth. Hence by a Metaphor it fignifieth to teach or instruct, because legem, qua per- holy doctrine or instruction cometh down like raine from heaven upon the minds and hearts of those that are taught. My doctrine shall distill as the dew, and my speech shall drop as the raine, said Msses (Deut. 32. 1.) And hence the whole Law of God is exprefied by a word in the Hebrew coming from this roote, that being powred down from heaven in showres of doctrine to make men fruitfull in every good word and work. In answer to which, Nullus ei simi- some translate this latter part of the verle, There is no Law-giver lis in Legisla- like unto him. Who is a Law-giver like him? or there is no Lawtoribm. Vulg: giver like him. To give Law, or to be a Law-giver, is more than barely to be a teacher, though he that teacheth, doth also (in a

sense) give Lawes.

Here, I conceive, we take the fittest and most suitable fignisication of the word, when we render it by teaching, Who teacheth like him? As if he had faid, None can teach like God, and therefore furely none can teach him how to governe the world, or to dispose of any mans person or condition, as thou, O Job, hast rashly or overboldly done; for while thou hast complained so much and so often of his dealings with thee, thou halt (upon the matter) attempted to teach him. But, Who teacheth like him? Where shall we find any able to give instruction, and apply do-Strine like God? God is exalted infinitely in power, and yet he condescends to be a teacher, or an instructer; God doth not stand upon his power only, he faith not, I have power to do what I will, I can force all men to my will, or break them if they will not, but he instructs and perswades, he labours to allure the soul into a right understanding of his will, and submission to it. Who teacheth like him ?

Hence note;

First, The great goodness of God; that he who hath all power to command. should yet vouch safe to instruct; that he who is the Indge, will also be the Teacher of his

This is the great Promise in the Covenant of grace, They shall be all taught of God (John 6. 45.) Some things may be known

by the light of nature, of which knowledge God is the Author, in the same sense, as he is of all natural Powers and faculties. But here Eliha intends a spiritual knowledge, both of God and of our selves, or a teaching of divine things by divine chastenings, both with respect to what we should do and defire, as also with respect to what we should show and avoid, which is the work of God alone by his grace and Spirit. Thus David shews how God is teaching while he is chastening (Pfal. 99.12.) Blessed is the man whom thou chaftenest, O Lord, and teachest out of thy Law. God teacheth, First, by his Word, (that's his ordinary way of teaching) Secondly, he teacherh by his Works; and those both the workes of Creation and of Providence, and by those, whether workes of Mercy or of Judgement: By all these meanes God teacheth. But that which Elibu chiefly aimeth at in this place (speaking to afflicted Tob) is his teaching by affliction, who teacheth like him? As if he had faid, God doth not lay his hand upon thee by affliction, only to make thee smart, but to make thee wife; he is instructing thee while he is afflicting thee. Further, as God teacheth by his Word and by his Works, so he teacheth most eminently by his Spirit, who alone maketh the teaching both of his Word and of his Works effectual upon the hearts of the hearers and beholders. Many are raught, but none to purpose, without the Spirit. Who teacheth like him?

Chap. 36.

Note Secondly;
God is no ordinary teacher; The teachings of God are above
all other teachings; There is no teacher to be compared
with God.

Elibu doth not say, Who teacheth besides God? There are many other teachers, but there is not one who teacheth like him. Some may say, wherein doth the excellency of divine teaching lie? how hath that the supereminence above all other teachings? Take the answer briefly in seven words.

First, none teacheth so plainly and clearly as God. The teachings of men are but dark and obscure to the teachings of God. Christ said (John 16. 26.) I shall no more speak nato you in parables, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father. God speaks by his Word and Spirit to the lowest and meanest understanding.

XX 2

Second-

Secondly, none teacheth like God; that is, so mildly, so moderately, so condescendingly to the condition and capacity of those with whom he hath to do. Christ said (John 16. 12.) I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; and therefore I will not say them now, I will not burden you beyond your strength. I know what lessons, what instructions you are sit for, and I will give you only these and no more, till ye are better prepared to receive them; I will give you only milk because ye

are children, and so not able to digest strong meat.

Thirdly, none teacketh like God, so patiently and meekly. There is nothing doth more provoke the passion of a teacher, than the untowardness and dulness of those that are taught. It was a very good Rule given by one of the Ancients, he that will teach children, must in a manner be a child; He must consider what they are, and forme himself to their condition, else she will never have the patience to teach them. O with what patience doth the infinite and only wife God reach his children! (1/a. 28.9, 10.) He giveth line apon line, and precept upon precept, here a little and there a tittle. Here is the patience of God; He doth not say, if ye cannot take it now, I will teach you no more; No, saith God, I will give precept upon precept, and line upon line; though former precepts have not been received, yet I will give you more, here a little and there a little, ye shall have another little to the former little. God was forty yeares tutoring and teaching the Ifraelites in the wilderness, to fit them for the potsession of Canaan. These three yeares, faith Christ, have I come looking for fruit, and all that while he was teaching them, to make them fruitfull; nor was he hafty then, but upon the intercession of the vineyard-dreffer, waited one year more. O the patience of God in teaching!

Fourthly, none teacheth like him, that is, so constantly and continually; He teacheth, and he is alwayes teaching; there is no hour, no moment, but one way or other God is teaching; By every thing we hear, or have to do with, in the wayes of his providence, he is teaching us. B. sides, how constant is God in reaching us formally, as 'tis said, in the Prophet (Jer. 35. 14, 15.) I have sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early, and fending them: As if the Lord did bestir himself in the morning, to send out teachers becomes. He sweeth his seed in the morning, and in the evening he doth not with hold his hand, as he requireth us to

do in all forts of duty; whether of charity and righteousness, towards our neighbour, or, of piety and holy worship towards him-

felf (Eccl. 11. 6.)

Fithly, none teacheth like him, that is, to truly, so unerringly. While men teach they sometimes misteach, while they lead, they often mistead; they teach error for truth, and unsafe doctrine for sound; they build wood, hay and stubble, in stead of gold, silver, precious stone, upon that sure soundation Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3.12.) The best, the wisest, and most knowing men may erre; only God knoweth the full compass of all mysteries, yea he is

Truth; therefore his teachings are most true.

Sixthly, none teacheth like him; that is, so authoritatively. Men teach in the name and authority of God; but God teacheth in his own name and authority. The Lord give h Authority to his own word. If the Lord hath said it, that's warrant enough to receive it and believe it. When Christ preached, the people wondered at his doctrine (Mat. 7. 29.) For he taught them as one baving authority, and not as the Scribes; that is, there went forth a mighty command with the word of Jesus Christ; He did not, as I may say, beg attention and submission to his doctrine, but exact it upon them, and draw it from them. Where God teacheth, he commandeth, his word worketh mightily; when he speaketh, all must hear at their peril. Where Princes give the rule and publish their Laws, subjects must hear and obey, or suffer for not obeying: How much more where God gives the Rule, and publisheth his Law!

Seventhly, who teacheth like him? that is, so effectually, so efficationsly. As God hath authority to charge his teachings upon us at our peril to receive them, so he hath a power to work our hearts to the receiving of them. Who teacheth thus like God? The Ministers of Christ teach in the authority of God, and charge all to receive what they say in his Name, but they cannot give an effect to the charge (Isa. 48. 17.) He teacheth to prosit. One translation saith, He teacheth things prostable. But that is a lean rendring, for so doth every Minister that teacheth as he ought; but our rendring carrieth the efficacy of the word of God in it, He teacheth to prosit; that is, he can make the dullest Scholar learn, he can make the most stubborn heart to submit. Christ speaking of this great work of God in teaching,

faith

faith (John 6. 45.) No man comseth unto me, except the Father draw him. What is that drawing? It is this teaching, as ye may see (vers. 45.) Every one therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me. That is, every one whom the Father hath vouchsafed to teach and instruct, that man cometh to me, that is, he believeth and obeyeth the Gospel, and submitteth both in judgment and practife. Every one that bath heard and learned of the Father cometh to me: There is not one whom God hath undertaken to teach, that doth miscarry. (Ifa. 32.4.) The heart of the rash shall understand knowledge; or, the heart of the hasty. Now hasty and rash persons, are heady and inconsiderate persons, and therefore none of the wisest; they usually have little judgment or discretion, who are much in passion; but God can make the heart of the rash to understand knowledge; that is, he can make them understand and know things aright, who seem most uncapable of, and are naturally at the greatest distance from a rightness of knowledge and understanding.

To close the Point, take these inferences from the whole.

First, If God be such a teacher, then say not in the bare teachings of men. What are the teachings of men to the teachings of God? Though you should have an Angel from heaven to speak to you, yet say not in his teachings, wait for the teachings of God. Till ye are taught of God ye never learn to purpose. Set your selves, not only as in Gods presence, but as under his Spirit, to be taught; wait for the moving of the Spirit in every ordinance, as they did for the Angels moving of the waters, who lay at the poole of Bethesda for healing (Joh. 5.4.)

Secondly, Seeing God teacheth thus paramount, seeing none search likehim, then submit to his teaching. Do not question any of his rules of life or dostrines of faith, they are all righteous and full of divine truth; you cannot do amis if you do, nor believe amis if you believe, no, nor mis of blessedness in doing and be-

lieving, what he hath raught.

Thirdly, Then appear as they who are taught of God.

You will say, How, or when doth it appear, that we are or have been taught of God? I shall answer that query in sour things.

First, If you are or have been taught of God, his teaching unteacheh or empryerh you, & that in a threefold respect. First, of your own carnal principles. The great business of divine teaching, is to un-

teach, to take men off from their own Will and Reason, from their own Rules, as also from those Customes which they have received by tradition from their fathers. If you would appear as taught of God, you must lay down all these. The teachings of grace empty the foul of what it hath taken up by Nature. Secondly, the teachings of God empty the foul of all felf-righteousness. If ye be taught of God ye will be nothing in your felves. Paul, before the teachings of God came, had confidence in the flesh. and boasted in his own righteousness; but when he was taught of God, he threw off all those. Thirdly, If ye are taught of God, that will certainly unteach and empty you of all unrighteousness. The Apostle speakes fully to that (Ephof. 4. 20, 21.) To have not so learned Christ, if so be that ye have been taught as the truth is in Jesus. If ye have been divinely taught, then this teaching hath emptyed you of the old man; as of all self-righteousness so of all unrighteousness towards others. It is impossible any should take in the teachings of God, and yet hold any finfull practifings.

Secondly, divine teachings, as they empty and unteach the foul, so they keep it very humble. Knowledg endangers us naturally to high thoughts of our selves, and hath a tendency in it to pride (1 Cer. 8. 1.) Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. Take knowledge barely as received of men, even the knowledge of divine things (for ye may have a humane knowledge of divine things) this usually makes the heart swell; but the knowledge we have from the teachings of God, makes us humble, it will cause us to cry out (as the Prophet did, when the Lord appeared and let out a more than ordinary manifestation of his glory, (1/a. 6.5.) me are undone. It was so with Fob, when the Lord had schooled him, and made himself more fully known to him than ever before, he presently cried out (Chap.41.5.) I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhormy self in dust and ashes. Nothing keeps the soul so humble as the teachings of God. Where we see any proud of what they have learned, it is an argument that either they were never taught of God, or, that as yet they have not understood his teachings.

Thi dly, The reachings of God do not only empty and humble the foul, but they transform the foul, and change it into another thing than it was, as to its state and qualities. The teachings of

God change not only our manners but our very natures; they not only give a light to the Understanding, but a newness to the Will, new Affections, new Desires. This is it which the Apossile calls the new creature (2 Cor. 5.17.) and that this creature is wrought to its highest perfection by the teachings of God, he sheweth (2 Cor. 3.18.) We all with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. The glass wherein we have this sight of the glory of God, is chiefly the Word. The glory into which we are changed by those sights, is our conformity to that holiness which shineth in the Word. And this change is twofold; First, from sin to grace, which is a degree of glory. Secondly, from glory to glory, that is, from a high to a higher, and at last to the highest degree of grace. Look what the Word is, and calleth us to be, that are we when taught according to the

truth of the word, by the power and Spirit of God.

Fourthly, The teachings of God confirm the foul in that which is taught, or we have learned. If God teach any divine lessor, that will flick. We receive many lessons from men, and let them Nip, as the Apostles word is (Heb. 2.1.) Doctrine taught us of God settles upon us, we hold the substance of ir, and hold forth the fruit or power of it in every season of our lives: yea, if trouble or persecution arise for the truth, they who are taught of God will hold it fast, though they let go all they have in this world for it. If God teach us the doctrine of Free Grace, how we are justified by the righteousness of Jesus Christ, without our own works; If God teach us the doctrine of pure Worthip, how he is to be served, and honoured according to his own will, without the Traditions of men, (as Christ spake (Mat. 15.9.) If (I fay) God teach us these, or any other saving truths, we cannot but hold them: whereas they who have received them from men will part with them on the account of man. Only that which God hath taught us abideth with us, and that no man can take from us. Men may take the life of such a one from him, which God hath given him, but they cannot take the truth from him which God hath taught him. What God teacheth, is written, as it were, with a pen of iron and the point of a diamond, it is graven upon the tables of the heart for ever. Thus we may in some measure discern who are taught of God; and seeing they who

are taught of him, are so taught, we may very well insist upon Elibu's chalenge; Who teacheth like him? And as there is no teacher like God, so neither is there any ruler like God; this also is taught us by Elibu, as a matter out of question, while in the next verse he proceeds to make more questions, or two questions more.

Vest. 23. Who hath enjoyned him his way? or who can say, thou hast wrought iniquity?

Projubere.

This verse holds out two things. First, the soveraignty; Secondly, the integrity of God. God is supream in power, and he is righteous in the use of his power, and therefore, O Job, thou hast much forgotten both thy self and him, in making so many complaints about thy condition, which is indeed to enjoyn God his way, or prescribe to him how he shall govern the world. And seeing no man hath enjoyned God siis way, who can question him about it, what way soever he is pleased to take, either with whole Nations, or with any of the sons of men.

Who hath enjoyned him his way, or, vifited him?

No manhath, no man can, enjoys him his way. God hath no vifitors over him. Mr. Broughton renders, Who gave him charge

over his wayes. Like that, Chap. 34. 13.

The way of God is any course which himself taketh, either in governing the wold in general, or any person in particular; who shall instruct him about either what or how he shall do, whom he shall spare, whom he shall punish, whose heart he shall soften, whose he shall harden, whom he shall save, whom he shall destroy, how he shall teach, which way he shall lead; in a word, how he shall administer justice and order any of his matters? all must be bound to and by his Lawes, he cannot be bound to or by the lawes and a escripts of any, either in works of Judgment or of Mercy, either in doing good to and for man, or in dealing out of evil. Further,

Who hath enjoyned him his may? By the way of God we may understand both the actions of God themselves, as also the reasons moving him to those actions. As if Elibu had said, Who hath taught God what to do? Who hath, or who can direct him what to do? Who may be so bold with God, who is the soveraign Lord over all

the earth, thus to enjoyn him his way?

Hence note; God is the first mover of all that himself doth;

No man hath shewed him or enjoyned him his way. He is the fountain of light, he seeth what to do; who hath been his counfellor? (1 Cor. 2. 16.) that is, no man hath, or may instruct him (1sa.40.13. Rom. 11.34.) Again, he is the fountain of power; none hath authority to direct him, he is above all; as he needs not the counsel of any, so he receiveth the rule from none. I have had occasion more than once in the process of this Book, to say somewhat of the soveraignty of God over all creatures, and therefore only remind it here, Who hath enjoyned him his may?

Or who can say, thou hast wrought iniquity?

The world is full of iniquity, but in God there is none at all. As God is not obliged to give any men an account of his works, so no man can find any, the least, real fault or defect in any of them; and if his works do not appear to to us now, yet at last they will appear to all without any shadow of iniquity. Samuel called together the Ifraelites, and demanded (1 Sam. 12.3.) Whose oxe have I taken? &c. Whom have I defrauded? &c. Come charge me, witness against me; who can say, I have wrought iniquity? It was much, and a rare thing for Samuel to carry it so justly, that none could challenge him; but when all the world shall be summoned before God, he will be able to put the question, Who of all the fons of men, can fay, I have wrought iniquity? None can fay ir, but with utmost impudency and highest blasphemy. It is impossible for God to work iniquity; not only is his Command, but his Will totally against it. What-ever God works is according to his own Will, and his Will is the Rule of Righteousness; therefore he can do no iniquity. There is no iniquity in acting or working according to the Law. If men act according to their will, they usually act iniquity, because their will is nor a Law, and is seldome conformed to the Law. The will of no man is so right, or so fixed in the right, as to be received for a Law. But seeing what-ever God doth, he doth it according to his own Will, and his Will is the righteous Rule of all things, therefore all must be right right which he doth: Who-ever took him tripping in his dealing? Who can fay, he bath wrought iniquity?

But why doth Elihu speak thus to Job? Had he ever said that

God works iniquity ?

I answer, He had not. Yet because he thought God might have done better by good men, or have given out that which was more suitable to their estate, than such continual sorrows and afflictions as he endured, therefore this saying is deservedly imputed to him. For, it would have become Job, and doth every man, to say, that is best done which God do h, and that he hash chosen or pitched upon the best, and most proper meanes of doing his own choisest servants good, even when it is worst with them in the world, or, when he afflicts them with the greatest evils; For, who can (then) say, he hath wrought iniquity?

Hence observe;
First, The infinite purity of God, as also his love to righteousness and justice;

Who, though he be so absolute in power, that none can call him in question (none can enjoyn him his way, and therefore none can question him for his way) yet he is so persect in righteousness, that no fault can be found in him, nor any error in his way. Though the Lord hath power to do what he will, yet he hath no will to do wrong with his power. The Lord neither doth nor can do wrong to those who have, to their power, continually wronged him. And indeed, he that bath all power in his hand, can have nothing butright in his heart. How few are there in power (though their way be injoyned to them, though they have power meerly by commission, from superior powers, though their power be such as they are to give an account of, yet, I fay, how few are there in power) who do not much iniquity, who do not, either for want of better information, or, of a better conscience, oppress, grieve and afflict those that have to do with them, or are subject to them! God may do what he will, yet will do nothing but what is right. How infinitely then is God to be exalted in his truth and righteousness! And thus the word oftruth exalts him (Deut. 32.4. 2 Chr. 19. 7. Rom 9. 14.) There is no unevenness, much less aberration in any of the ways of God, he never trod awry, nor took a false step; who can say unto him (without great iniquity) thou hast wrought iniquity.

If God works no iniquity in any of his wayes, whether in his

general or special providences, Then,

All ought to fit down quietly under the workes of God. Though he bring never so great judgments upon nations, he doth them no wrong; though he break his people in the place of dragons, and cover them with the shadow of death, he doth them no wrong; Though he sell his own people for nought, yet he doth them no wrong. All which, and several other grievances, the Church sadly bemoans (Psal. 44.) yet without raising the least dust, concerning the justice of God, or giving the least intimation of iniquity in those several

fad and severe wayes.

Secondly, We should not only fit down quietly under all the dispensations of God, as having no iniquity in them, but exalt the righteousness of God in all his dispensations, as mingled also, & sprink led with mercy. Though we cannot see the righteousness of God in some of them, yet we must believe he is not only so, but merciful in all of them; though the day be dark, & we cannot discern how this or that fu es with the righteousnes, much less with the goodness and mercy of God, yet fit down we ought in this faith, that both this and that is righteous, yea, that God is good to Ifrael, in the one and in the other. When the propher was about to touch upon that string, he fift laid down this principle as unquestionable (Fer. 12. 1.) Righteous art thon, O Lord, yet give me leave to plead with thee about thy Judgments: Why doth the way of the wicked prosper? Why is it thus in the world? I take the boldness to put these questions, O Lord, yet I make no question but thou art righteous, O Lord: It becomes all the fons of men to rest patiently under the darkest providences of God. And let us all, not only not charg God foolishly, but exalt him highly, and cry up both his righteousness and kindness towards all his people; For who can say to God, then haft wrought iniquity? Having in several other passages of this book, met with this matter also, I here briefly pass it over.

Octar be evelod in his timb and rightern

J O B, Chap. 36. Verf. 24, 25.

24. Remember that thou magnifie his work, which men behold.

25. Every man may see it, man may behold it afar off.

Hese two verses contain the third advice, counsel or exhortation given by Elihu to Job, stirring him up to give glory to God in his providential proceedings with him.

There are three things confiderable in these two verses.

First, The general duty commanded, which is, to magnifie the

work of God.

Secondly, We have here a special reason or ground of that duty; the visibility and plainness, yea, more than so, the illustriousness of his work. The work of God is not only such as some men may see, but such as every man may see, yea, behold afar off.

far off.

Thirdly, We have here an incentive to provoke to this duty,

in the first words of the Text, Remember.

Vers. 24. Remember that thou magnifie his work, which men behold.

To Remember imports chiefly these two things.

First, to call to mind what is past (Mat. 26.75.) Then Peter

remembred the words of Christ.

Secondly, To remember, is to keep somewhat in mind against the time to come; in which sence the Law runs (Exod. 20.8.) Remember the rest-day; that is, keep it in mind, that when-ever it cometh, or upon every return of that day, ye may be in a six possure and preparation for it; Remember the rest, or sabbath day to keep it holy.

To remember in this place, is set (I conceive) in a double opposition: First, To sorgetfulness of the duty here called for; remember and do not forget it. Secondly, To the slight performance of the duty here called for; the magnifying of the

work of God.

Remens-

Remember that then magnifie.

As if he had said, Be then daily and duely affected with it, do not put it off with a little, or a bare remembrance; the matter is weighty, consider it sully. As if Elihu had said to Job, Thou hast much forgotten thy self, and gone off from that which is thy proper work. I have heard thee much complaining of the workes of God, but thy work should have been to magnifie the work of God. Though God hath cast thee down and laid thee low, yet thy business should have been to exalt the work of God; Remember, it would much better become thee to ast another part than this; thou shouldest have asted the part of a magnifier of the work of God, not the part of a complainer against it. Remember that thou

i. c.
hinti
Augeas, extollas ejus opus,
non accufes ut
nunc facis.
Merc.

Magnifie;

The root fignifieth, to encrease and extol. We may consider a twofold magnifying of the work of God. There is an inward magnifying of the work of God; and there is an outward magnifying of the work of God.

First, There is an inward magnifying of the work of God, when we think highly of it; thus did the Virgin in her song (Luke 1.46.) My soul doth magnific the Lord. Her heart was

raised up, and stretched out in high thoughts of God.

Secondly, There is an outward magnifying of the work of God. To theak highly of his work is to magnify his work; to live holily and fruitfully is to magnifie his work. We cannot make any addition to the work of God, there is no fuch magnifying of it; but we must strive to give the works of God their full dimension, and not lessen them at all. As we must not diminish the number of his works, so we must not diminish the just weight and worth of them. There is such a charge of God ro the Prophet about his word (Fer. 26.2.) Go tell the people all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word. Deliver thy meffage in words at length, or in the full length of those words in which it was delivered unto thee. We. then magnifie the work of God, when we diminish not a tittle. As we cannot add any thing to it, so we must neither abate not conceal any thing of it. To magnifie, is not to make the works of God great, but to declare and fet forth the greatness of them;

that's

that's the magnifying here especially intended. Remember that

thou magnifie his morks.

I shall not stay upon that other reading, Remember that then art ignorant of his work. The same word which we translate, to Memento quod magnifie, with the variation of a point, fignifieth to erre; hence ignores opus that translation. There is a profitable fense in it; for indeed the sim. Vulg. best knowledge which we have of the work of God may be called ignorance, and we faid to be ignorant of that work which we kill cum are most knowing in. Yet because this is straining of the Text, I NIW quanpass it by, and keep to our own rendring, Remember that thon quan filt magnific

His mork.

What work? Here is no work specified, therefore I anfwer ;

First, All the workes of God are here included; Magnify his work. What-ever is a work of God, what-ever hath the stamp and inscription of God upon it, see that thou magnifie it.

Secondly, and more specially, We may understand this work of God to be the work of Creation, the goodly structure and fabrick of this visible world; and indeed that's a work so great and magnificent, that it ought to be continually remembred and magnified.

Thirdly, Others restrain it more narrowly, to that part of the work of God which is eminent in the heavenly meteors, and wonderful changes in the air, together with the motions and influences of the stars, of which we shall find Elihu discoursing at large, like a divine Philosopher, in the next Chapter. There are frange works of God in these lower heavens, where those meteors are born and brought forth; Remember to magnifie those works.

Fourthly, I rather conceive (though fuch works of God are afterward spoken of) that Elihu intends the work of Providence in both the appearances of it, as it is a white or black work, as it is for good or for evil, as it is in judgment or in mercy. A modern Interpreter pitcheth upon the former, and upon one particular of the former; as if Elibu had directly led Jobs thoughts back to the Deluge, that work of God in bringing the Flood upon the old world; and if we can but go back and honour God for his past works of Providence, we shall magnifie him for his pretent,

confundit potius errara quam ignorars significar. Druf.

Hujus mundê opificium intelligo. Bold.

fent. As if Elibuhad said; Thou complainest that thou art overflowed with a deluge of afflictions; but doest thou remember how God destroyed the whole world at once in the universal flood? But though I think, that may be taken in among other works, yet to restraine it to that is a great deal too narrow for this Text. Therefore under this work of God, we may comprehend any great work of God, which is upon record, or which we have heard of, wherein he bath shewed his power, wisdome, and justice.)

Remember his work;

The work of providence. Those works of providence which are afflictive, have a great place in this Text, because the person spoken to was one in an afflicted condition. And I conceive Elihu directs Fob not so much to magnifie God for the day of prosperity and Sun-shine which he once had as for the day of adverfity and darkness, which then covered him. Remembar that thou magnifie his work,

Which men behold,

De que cecinerunt viri.

Qued laudarunt justi viri. Chald:

Which the sons of Enosh behold, saith Mr Broughton. But the word Sons is not in the Text, there 'tis only men, or weak men! The word which we translate to behold, hath a double fignification, and that hath caused a double translation: It fignifieth, first, to fing; secondly, to see or behold. It is translated by several in the former sense, Remember that thou magnifie his work, whereof men have lang; The Chaldee Paraphrase saith, For which just men have given praise in Psalmes and songs. Beholding fully a good thing and praising it, or praising God for it, go together, as Mr Broughtons gloffe expresserh it out of Ramban. Gracious and holy men do not only speak, but sing the wonderful works of God; And, that praises were inslong or verse, both the Scriptures and many ancient Authors testifie. God works, and men fing the praises of God for his works, as Moses, David, and Deborah did. And we find all the Saints (Rev. 15.3.) finging praises to the Lord for the great work which he will do in bringing forth Judgement to perfection upon Babylon. Thus it is a truth, the work of God is to be fung and fet forth in meeter, or in verle, som off si

We take the other translation, Which men behold; which, with respect to that which followeth (v: 25.) where both expressions

refer to the eye, is, I conceive, most proper. Magnifie the work of God, which men behold; As if Eliha had said, O feb, I advise thee to leave off fearthing into the fecrets of God, and fet thy felf to confider and magnifie those works of God which are plain and lye open to every mans eye.

The word rendred Behold, may note, both a transient, and an intense or fixt beholding, to look withly as we say, to look fastning the eye folicitously, yea, it imports, not only to behold with

the eye of the body, but with the eye of the mind.

Some Interpreters put an Emphasis upon the word men, as noting excellent men, vertuous men, men of vertue in their qua- non hominos lities, and of excellency in their abilities; fuch are men indeed, fed wiri praworthy men, worthy the name of man; as it hath been faid of old, flames, ut fit Where there are no men, do thou play the man, act and speak like nomen desvis. a man. Some men have nothing but the outside of a man. This is Sie alibi, in loa good notion. For good men, holy men, men of divine excellen viri, virum to cy, are most quick-sighted, and quick-sented; First, elpying the prasts. Drust appearances of God in any of his providences, and then making a due improvement of them. Therefore (saith Elihu) magnifie his work, which men, that is, holy and good men, behold and take notice of. David speaking of the works of God in that notable place, (Pfal. 92.6.) faith, A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this; that is, such a one as he, cannot behold the work of God. And therefore it is more than a criticisme Nontam excelto restraine the word men, to men of this fort; yet it must be lentes, quam granted that the word fignifies not only excellent men, but any miferos et plefort of men, whether wife or foolish, rich or poor, and the weaker nes omnino hofort of men more specially than the stronger and more poble in mines signifiany kind.

And to take the word in that universality, as compassing and comprehending all forts of men, even those who are dim fighted, blear-eyed, that is, of weakest understanding, may be a good improvement of the Text, implying, that as some of the works of God are so mysterious, that the wisest cannot see the meaning of them, so many, very many, of his works are so manifest, that common men may compalle them. Magnifie his works, which men

behold.

The works of God are of two forts, visible and invisible. First, Such as we see or know by 1 ght: Thus the works of Creation,

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Creation, and the works of Providence, his present providences,

are such as we behold, they are visible works.

Secondly, There are invisible works of God, which we cannot behold, but must believe, and can know only by faith; such are his spiritual works, or what he works upon or in the spirits of the children of men: These are written in too small a letter for the eye of Nature to behold; none can see them or behold them but by an eye of faith, or spiritual understanding. The works of regeneration and sanctification (for which God is wonderfully to be magnified) may be seen or beheld in the fruits and effects of them, in those they are very visible, but they cannot be seen in themselves. The past and future providences of God cannot now be seen by the eye, but by faith they may, and we ought to believe that fuch things were wrought, and shall be wrought; we are to receive the testimony given by faithful History, that such things were done, though we never law the doing of them, and we are to receive the sure word of Prophecy that such things shall be done, though we live not to see the doing of them. The work of God inrended here by Elihu is a visible work, therefore it mult fall among his providences.

Vers. 25. Every man may see it.

כל ארם ments. Merc:

That is, say some, every wife and understanding man; but ra-Omnes homines ther, any man, (as was touched at the former verse) if he be but in quibus est a man of common understanding, if he have: ny spark of Reason vel mics bone lest in him unquencht, if he have his eyes in his head, he may see it; the eye of every one who will not thut his eyes against the light, must needs see it. We say, Who so blind as they that will not fee.

Man may behold it afar off.

The word here rendred Behold, is not the same which we tranflate Behold in the former verse, nor is it the same word which signifierh to fee in the former part of this verse. Some make a difference between feeing in the former part of the verse, and Beholding in the latter. Holy and good men see the works of God clearly and diffinctly, they look on them with delight and contentment; the common fort of men only behold them, first, darkly, as at a distance; secondly, consusedly and in grosse.) Man may bekold it

اللاح" חוה נבט Afar off.

There is a four-fold conception about that afar off.

First, Some expound it for afar off in time. The work of God doth not weare out; that first and great visible work of Creation Eminu, i.e. a which was from the beginning, yet remaineth. Ages pass away, formatione but the work of God doth not pais away, though done some hun- mundi but u'gs

dreds, yea thousands of years ago.

Secondly, Afar off, that is, imperfectly, not fully; he may moth. have some discoveries of it, every man the weakest man may dis- Non plane cern somewhat of it. Things that are high and afar off, are con- nem ejm. fuledly feen, not clearly or fully discerned. A man that is afar off Pisca cannot be distinguishingly knowne. When a man is afar off, we may fee him to be a man, but what manner of man he is, or who he is, we cannot discern; though possibly it may be our own father, yet being afar off we cannot know him diffinctly. Thus to fee afar off notes only a confused knowledge. That's a good sense;

things afar off are not distinctly seen.

Thirdly, Afar off, may be expounded of all the fight we have on this side Heaven. In this world we see all that we see afar off. we have not a neat intimate knowledge of things, especially not of the best things, spiritual things, of all them we must say, we know but in part, and see thorow a glasse darkly, as the Apostle speaks, (1 Cer. 13. 12.) Such things as are not immediate to us, E longingue, we are said to see thorow a glass, or as represented in their ef- i. c. ex posts fects, and issues, or in their back parts, as God himself is seen. felin. Mercs Exod. 33. 18, 23.) Thou falt fee my back parts : but my face shall not be seen, said God to Moses when he moved to see his glory.

Fourthly, This beholding afar off, may note the greatness of the work of God, the exceeding light somness and gloriousness of it. Those things that are great, may be seen a great way off, A high Tower is feen afar off. We hardly believe the doctine and reports of Aftronomers, how far off the Sun is, which every eye beholds. Though the Sun be so many thousand miles distant, vet any man may see it, 'tis so great, so beau iful, so bright a body. Many of the works of God have such a beauty, radiancy and luster in them, that any that are not stark blind may see them afar off. Remember that thou magnific his work, which men behald.

A Longe. Mont: Rab: Solo-

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Every man may see it, man may behold it afar off. From the context of these two verses, note,

First, We are very apt to forget our duty in giving God the glory of his works.

The memento or remember at the beginning of the verse is no more than needs. We have bad memories for any thing that's good, especially for the good word and the good works of God. We are so far from magnitying his work, that we often forget his work. Tis said of Israel (Pfal. 106. 13.) They soon forgat his works. If we soon forget the works of God, we shall sooner forget to magnifie God for his work. Many remember the work of God, who do not magnifie it, nor him for it; but none can magnifie the work of God, nor God for his work, who do not remember it.

Secondly, In that the Textsaith, Remember that then magnifie; not only that thou speak of, or declare his work, but magnific it.

Note; We usually have low apprehensions of the monk of God.

While we remember it, we do not magnific it; while we speak of his work, we seldome praise his work. It is said of the vertuous Woman, (Prov. 3.1. 31.) Her own works praise her in the Gates; that is, they like so many Elegant Oratours tell all that pass by, how praise-worthy she is. The works of God will praise him, whether men do or no. All thy works shall praise thee, (saith David, Psal. 145. 10.) What then should they do for whom they are wrough 2 The latter part of the verse shews what they will do who know what God hath wrought for them; Thy Saints (saith he) shall bless thee. They who have (as most have) tow thoughts, can never give high praises of the works of God.

Thirdly, In that this counsel and exhortion is given to fob, in that this spuris, as it were, put to his sides, Remember that show magnific,

Note

The best men need menitours and remembrancers to quicken them about their duty of magnifying the works of God.

The Lord, though he needeth not, yet will have us to be his remem-

femembrancers, to do our works for us, if we would have our works done; the Lord would have us by prayer to mind him of our own, and of all his peoples condition (Ifa. 62. 6.) To that are the Lords remembrancers (fo we put in the Margine, and in the Text) ye that make mention of the Lord, &c. The Lord will have us to be his remembrancers. And though he is ever mindful of his Covenant, yet he liketh it well to be put in mind of it. But O what need have we of a remembrancer, to put us in mind of the work of God, and to magnifie his work! We need a dayly remembrancer to put us in mind of what we should do, how much more of what God hath done! We need to be minded of that which its a wonder how we can forget, our latter end, or how frayle we are; how much more do we need to be minded of those duties which fit us for our latter end, and lead us to those enjoyments which never end!

Fourthly, Observe; Such is the sinfulness of mans heart, and his sluggishness, that he hardly remembers to magnific God for those works which he cannot but see.

Elihuurgeth Job, and with him all men, to remember that they magnifie even that work of his which men behold, and which every man may fee. How hack are they in or to that great duty of magnifying God, who when they fee, or may fee, if they will, his mighty works, yet mind not the magnifying of him!

Fifthly, Observe s: Some morks of providence are so plain, that every man, that dother not wilfully shut his eyes, may behold them:

He is altogether stupid and blockish, that seeth not what all may see. Hence the Psalmist, having said, O Lord, how great are thy morks, concludeth such among brutes and sools, (Psal 92.6.) The brutish man knoweth not, ne ther doth a fool understand this. It was the saying of Plato an Heathen; That man is worthy his eyes should be pulled out of his head, who doth not lift them up on high, that he may admire the wisdome of the Creatour in the wonderfull sabrick of the world; I may adde, and in the works of providence: Are they not such, that as the Prophet speaks, He that runs may read them?

Sixthly,

Sixthly, Consider why doth Elibu thus charge it upon Job? furely to humble him for his sin, in that he did not magnifie God for his works.

Hence Note;

It is a great aggravation of our neglect of praising God for his works, or of our not magnifying the works of God, seeing his works are obvious to every man, even to the weaker and ruder sort of men.

If the very blind may see them, how sinfully blind are they, who see them not! The works of God should be sought out, (Psal.111.2, 4.) If they lie in corners, yet they are to be sought out, and they are sought out of them that have pleasure therein. If God should hide his work under ground, if God should put his Candle under a bushel (as Christ saith men do not, Mat. 5.) yet 'tis our duty to seek it out, and set it upon a Candlestick, that all may behold it, and praise him for it. Now if the most hideden works of God must be sought out, that they may be magnished, surely then, when the works of God stand forth and offer themselves to our view, and we cannot tell which way to draw our eyes from them, how great a sin is it, not to behold them, not to give him the glory of them.

Seventhly, Observe;

To magnifie the works of God is mans duty, yea it is a most necessary and indispensible duty.

This is the poynt chiefly intended by Eliba in his present discourse with Job; This containeth the sum and substance of the whole Text. To magnifie the work of God is so necessary, so indispensible a duty, that A remember is put upon it, less at any time it should slip from us. The Lord knowing how great, how weighty, how comfortable, how profitable a duty it is to keep the Rest day, presixeth this word, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, (Exod. 20. 8.) I might give instance from several other Scriptures, importing those duties which have a memento put upon them to be of great necessary, and that the Lord will not bear with us if we say them by, or neglect the constant performance of them. To forget any duty is very sinfull, how much more those which we are specially warned to remember that we do them!

David was not farisfied in doing the duty of the text alone, but must associate others with him in it. (Pf. 34. 3.) O let us magnifie the Lord together; that's a bleffed confort, the confort of the bleffed for ever. The whole work and reward too, of Saints in heaven is, and eternally will be, to magnify God; and they have the beginnings of that work and reward, who are fincerely magnifying his work here on earth. God hath magnified his word (in all things) above his name (Pfal. 138.2.) and the reason is, because his workes answer or are the fulfilling of his word to the praise of his gloricus name. Now if God hath magnified his word by his workes then we must magnifie his workes, or him in his workes, For wherein doth God magnifie his word but in his works? He hath magnified his work by bringing his word forth in his works: Surely then if God hath magnified his word by bringing it forth in his works, then 'tis our duty to magnifie the works of God, which are the product, effect and answer of his word.

But some may say, how is that done? I would give answer to

this question in five things.

First, Then we magnifie the work of God, when we magnifie God for his work: we cannot magnifie the mercy of God, but by magnifying the God of our mercys; We cannot magnifie his work while we neglect himself. we magnifie God in his work, first, when we ascribe the whole efficiency of what we see done in the world, to him, and say, This is the finger of God, Or when we fay, according to this of that time, What hath God wrought? (Numb. 23. 23.) To magnifie the work of God is to give the whole of it to Cod. Tis the hand of God upon a work that fets the price upon any work, and makes it worthy to be magnified. As in some Pictures, this sets a price upon them, to say they are fuch a mans work, the work of fuch a famous Artiff, the work of Apelles, or of Michael Angelo. So if we would magnifie any providential work, we must say, it is the work of the great God, it is he that hath done it; the eye of our mind must look directly at God in ruling and governing of the world. While we pore much upon, or flay our thoughts about second causes, we cannot exalt the work of God; though we call it Gods work, yet if our hearts hang about second causes, the work cannot be exalted as his. Tis a depression of the work of God to put any thing of man uponir. To honour the work of Cod is to give him the

whole effect of the work. As we then magnifie God when we look to him alone, with a fingle eye, as the end of all our works There is nothing doth magnifie God in what we do, but our looking to God as the end of all we do; Let our work be what it will, never fo glittering, never fo gay and glorious in the eye of the world, yet if it be not configned over to God, it is a base and pittiful work; if any man dedicates his work to himself he dishonours his work: Now (I say) as it magnifieth our work when we make God the end of our work) fo that which magnifieth Gods work, is, when we look upon him, not only as having an hand in it, but as being both the beginner and ender of it. If we take or give this to the creature, that is, fit down in this or that Instrument, as the means by which we have attained our end, or as the end of what we have attained, we spoil the work as to God, or despoil God of his work. Remember, this, and this only, magnifieth our work, when we with a fingle eye look to God as the author and as the end of it. Every work we see done is magnified, and God in it, when we look to God as the Alpha and Omega, as the Author and Ender of it.) Not is this true only in those works of God which he dorn more immediately, but where men act most, and a e very instrumental. Let us therefore ascribe every work to God, and that first, in afflicting us; such an eye Foseph had (Gen. 45. 8.) It was not you that sent me hither but God; that is, not so much you, as God (saith Foseph to his brethren) I do not say it was you (though you were unkind brethren) it was not you that sent me hither, but God : I look at him more than at you in that great affliction, which was brought upon me by your envy and unbrotherly unkindness towards me. Such an eye David had when he was under a very grievous, black, dark providence, when his fon role up against him, and when his subjest Shimei cursed him, even then he magnified that work of God, by ascribing it wholly unto him (2 Sam. 16. 10.) The Lord hath said unto him, curse David. He magnified God in that great affliction by looking at the hand of God alone in it, and paffing by Shimei's, both undutifulness and extream malignity. He faid as much, while he tells us he faid norhing, in a like or as bad a case (Psal. 39. 9.) I opened not my mouth, because thou did st it. Hence that reproof in the Prophet (Isa. 5. 12.) They regard not the work of the Lord, wor consider the operation of his hand, Second-

C1. -

Secondly, Let us ascribe every work to God in exalting us; such an eye had the Church to God (Psal. 44. 1,2,3.) Our fathers have told us, what work then didst in their dayes; Thou didst drive out the heathen by thy hand, and plantedst them, they got not the land in possession by their own sword, &c. but by thy right hand, and thine arm, &c. Here is no mention at all of Joshua's achievements and samous victories in subduing the Canaanites, &c. All is given to God, and he alone exalted for that exalting work. That's the first answer: Then we magnifie the work of God, when we acknowledge him alone both in assistant and exalt-

ing us.

Secondly, Then we magnifie the work of God, when we beat out, as it were, and fift all the circumstances of his work (as we fay) to the bran, that so we may find out every perfection, every glory of it: when we do not only behold and fee the wo k, but when (as direction is given, Pf. 48.) We walk abent Zion, tell her tomers, and consider her pallaces, that is, when we do not look upon things only in the bulk, but make an exact scrutiny, or take a full view of every part. We cannot magnifie the work of God by a bare beholding of ir, but by prying into every circumstance of it, or by confidering what excellencies and rarities are in it. As we magnifie our fintul works (in one sence we should magnifie our fins, that is, aggravate them, not magnifie them to applaud them, or glory in them, but to make our selves ashamed of them, as (I say) we magnifie our finful works, or what we have done finfully, when we confider all the circumstances of our fins, as committed against light and love, against mercy and goodness, against the parience and forbearance of God, against our own profestions and promises, against our experiences and priviledges, all which thould oblige us to holiness, and engage us to a gracious circumspection in all our wayes, and walkings, lest at any time we should fin against God and grieve his Spirit: So we magnifie the works of God when we eye all the circumstances of them, and consider them as done for us when we could do nothing for our selves, as done for us when we must have perished and been undone, unless God had appeared for us; as done for us when we deserved not the least good to be done for us; as done for us when none would do any thing for us, none caring for our foules; as done for us when none could do any thing for us. These and such like

circumstancial considerations, exceedingly magnitue the work of God. A bare behold, a transfert look may discover no great matter, but if we seriously weigh every particular, we shall then see cause enough to magnitue the work of God. Eliah (1 Kings 18. 43.) commanded his servant to go look towards the sea, and when he went first, he saw nothing, but being commanded to go seven times, he at the seventh saw a little cloud rising out of the sea, as big as a mans hand; but at the last, beaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. If we would look again and again, if we would look seven times upon the work of God, that which at first seemed nothing, or afterwards no bigger than a mans hand, or no bigger than a mans hand could effect and bring about, will at last be magnified to such a vastness, that all

must confess, the hand of God hath done it.

Thirdly, We then magnifie the works of God, when we freely submit to God in them, as just and righteous, when we accept and take them kindly at his hand, not only when they are outward kindnesses, but crosses. All the great words and rhetorick we can bestow upon the works of God will not magnifie them, unless we freely submit to them as just and righteous. They that would magnifie the works of God, must say, Judgment and righteousness are the habitation of his throne, while they can fee nothing but Clouds and darkness round about him (Psal. 97. 2.) I (faith the Pialmitt) am in the dark about all that God is doing at this day, yet of this I am as confident as confidence it felf, Judgment and Righteousness are the habitation of his throne; I know God doth nothing amis, no not in the least. Thus John in the Revelation (Chap. 15. 3:) faw them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, and they (faith he) fing the Song of Moses, &c. saying, great and marvelous are thy works, just and true are thy mayes. The works of God in Judgment upon Babylon, are full of justice, and we magnifie them by proclaiming and crying them up as just; yea, the work of God in judgment upon Zion, is exceedingly magnified, when Zion submits to it, and embraceth it as just and righteous. It was the great fin of the house of Israel, when they faid (Ezek. 18.25.) The wayes of God are not equal. As if they had faid, are these the Lords equal dealings, that we his People should be given up to the hand of the enemy, and fuffer fuch things as thefe? yea, yea, the house of Israel must sav, all the works of God, not only his exalting work, but his hombling work, are equal, just and righteous, for we have sinned. This is to magnite the work or God.

Fourthly, To magnitive the work of God, is to look upon his work what-ever it is, not only as having justice in it towards all men, but as good and being full of goodness to his People. Possibly it may be very hard work, yet we must being our hearts to say it is good work, good to and for the Israel of God. Thus the holy man of old magnified the work of God (Psal. 73.1.) Truly God is good to Israel. This he spake while he was bemoaning himself under very afflicting providences. We magnifie the afflicting works of God, when we submit to them as just, much more, when we embrace them as good. And it was very much the defign of Eliha to bring Job off from disputing about the evils with which God had so long exercited him, to a ready yeeldance that they were good for him, and that in all the Lord intended nothing

but his good.

Fifthly, To magnifie the work of God, is to answer the end of it. Every work is magnified when it receiveth its end; if a work be done, yet if it have not its effect, if it bring not that about to which it was deligned, the worker receives no honour from it, not is the work honoured. To work in vain, is a debasing, a fessening of any work, nor a magnifying of it. The Apostle was afraid to bestow his labout in preaching the Gospel in vain. When people still continue in their blindness and unbelief, &c. this layeth the preaching of the Gospel low; but when souls are convinced and converted, and come flocking in, then the Gospel is magnified, and the word of the Lord glorified, as the Apostle prayed it might (2 Thef. 3.1.) Now as the word of God is magnified when it attains its end, to the work of God is magnified when we give him, or come up to those ends for which he wrought it: But it we let God lose the end of his work, we do what we can to debate his work, as if he had done it in vain. We fay the works like a fool that ha h not proposed an end to every work he doth; and he appears not very wife, at least not very powerful, who attaineth routhe end or ends for which he began his work. The most wife God hath his end and aim in all his works in this world; and this is the honour we do his work, when we labou, first, to know, and fecondly, to give him his end in every work.

Ada 2

But if any ask, What are the ends of God in his work?

Lanswer, They are very various.

First, The chief end of all that God doth, is the advancement of his own Name and Glory. As he made all things for himselft in Creation, so he doth all things for huntelt in Providence. That which is the fin of man is the holiness of God, to seek himself. It is most proper for God, who is the chief good, and whose glory is the ultimate end of all things, o fet up himfelf in all things (Prov. 16.4.) The Lord bath made all things for himself, saith Solomon. And the Apostle saith as much (Rom. 11.36.) Of him and through him, and to him, are all things : to whom be glory for ever, Amen. All things are of him, therefore all things should return unto him. It we would magnifie any work of God, we must be sure to give him this end, the glory of it. Let it not fatisfie us, that we are advanced, or get up by the works of God, unless we our selves advance his glory by them. Many advance themselves, and are lifted up with pride, when God works for them or by them, not at all minding that which they should chiefly mind, the glorifying of God in by what he hath wrought, either for themselves or others.

Secondly, God hath this in defign, by all his works, to make us better. If it be a work of Judgment, it is to make us better, and then we exalt his works of Judgement, when we are bettered by them, when we are more humbled and weaned from the world by them. And as 'tis the defign of God to make us better by his works of Judgment, so by all his works of mercy. The Apostle befeechethus by the mercies of God, to prefent our bodies (that is, our whole selves) a living sacrifice, in all holy service to himself (Rom. 12. 1.) What will it advantage us to be bettered in our outward enjoyments, by what God works or doth for us, unless we learn to be better, and do his work better ? that is, unless our hearts be more holy, and we more fruitful in every good word and work. Some will magnifie the work of God by keeping a day of thankfgiving, because they are richer or greater by what God hath wrought for them, who yet are not a whit more holy or spirirual by it. Wo to those who magnifie the work of God because they think it shall go better with them, when themselves are not better. Enquire therefore what lust hath the work of God moved you to mortifie, what grace hath the work of God pur you upon the exercise of : They only indeed magnific the work of

God who have such workings towards God. It were better not receive a mercy, than not to be bettered by a mercy. It is not our crying up the works of God in our words, but in our works, which is the magnifying of them. It is more safe for us to say nothing of what God hath wrought for us, than to publish it, or make our boast of it, when we our selves do nothing worthy of it, in a way of condecency, and proportion to it. This the design of God in giving promises to make us cleans our selves from all filthiness of slesh and spirit, persetting holiness in the sear of God (2 Cor. 7.1.) Much more having given us any great performances of his promises, doth he expect that we should be clean and holy. O then what a pittiful course do they take, who pretending to magnificathe works of God, do such things as are a desilement both to slesh and spirit!

A third defign of God in working for us, is to make us trust him more, or, to be more in believing. 'Tis shewed (Psal. 78. 4.) what great things God did for the Jewish nation, and for their fathers; But what did God ayme at in all? we have the anfwer (v. 8.) That they might fet their hope in him, and not forget his workes. The aim which God had in those great works, was that their hope might be fet upon him, that they might trust in himmore then ever they had done. The Lord, by the great works he doth, would gain upon our faith, or cause us to trust him so: the future. How dishonorably do they carry it towards God, who believe not his word, much more they who believe not his workes, that is, who believe him not, notwithstanding his workes, as 'tis faid of Ifrael (Pf. 78. 32.) For all this they finned fill; and believed not his wondrous works. The Pialmist doth not mean, that they did not believe such works had been done; but the meaning is, they did not trust God who had done those works. These and many more dutyes the Lord teacheth us by his word, and he teacheth them also by his workes, as it is faid (v. 22.) who teacheth like him? The Lord teacheth us many excellent lessons by his works, if we had hearts to learn them. Lay these things together in practife, and they will be the best, yea, they are the only way of magnifying the works of God done for us. And, if the works of God are to be magnified all these wayes, then they fall short of this duty,

First, Who only make a report of the works of God, who tell the

the story of what he hath done, and so have done. As we ought to adoine the doctrine of God (Tit. 2.) so likewise the doings of God, or what God hath done by our doings. Meer narratives about the work of God, is far below magnitying his work.

Secondly, They fail much more who extenuate and diminish the works of God, who obscure or eclipse his workes. As in our confessions of repentance, it is a sign of a bad heart barely to report our sins before God, without aggravating them in their sinfulness; but in confession to extenuate our sin theweth a very rotenand naughty heart: so in our confessions of praise, meetly to report what God hath done for us, without putting an accent or a due emphasis upon his mercies, shews much coldness of spirit in the duty; but to clip and lessen the workes of God, to hide and darken them, to abate and detract from them, shewes a base and a wicked spirit.

Thirdly, How do they fail in magnifying the workes of God, who do not only conceal how good they are, but bring up an ill report upon them, as those searchers did upon the land of Canaan. Those works and dispensations of God, which (like that land) flow with milk and honey, may be looked upon and censured by some, as good for nothing but to eat up and consume those that are

under them.

Fourthly, They who are impatient under any work of God, who murmur and repine at it, are far from magnifying the work of God.

Fifthly, They are far from magnifying the work of God, who think themselves so wise that they could mend the work of God; had they the pensel in their hand they would make fairer work of it: what hudling is here? think some; what consusion is here? say others; what sad work is here? faith a third. If we had the ordering of things what an orderly world would we make, if we had the ordering of things (as God hath) we would quickly cure and remedy all these disorders. Though such so mal speeches be not uttered, yet such things are spoken in parables, the actions of some tell us such are their thoughts, as if they could mend the work of God, and govern the world with greater moderation than is; though indeed we need not scruple to call the wises man in the world a very dorard, if he thinks so, or that any thing can be done more equally than God hath done it. Let all flesh

fleth adore, let none presume to question the work of God; let God alone with his work; as he will have no controler, so he needs no counseller. Remember, tis mans duty to magnific his work, not to mend it, to shew how good it is, not to attempt the making of it better. And indeed as it is the highest poynt of presumption, so of ignorance, to meddle with the mending of it. The Lord is a Rock (saith Moses, Deut. 32. 4.) and his work is perfect. Who but a sool, or who but by the over-working of his own folly would venture to mend that which is already, not only perfected, but perfect, were it only the work of a man, much more when it is the work of God, the only wise God?

And that we may be provoked humbly to magnify, and for ever deterred from that proud attempt of finding fault with, or mend-

ing the work of God, consider these things;

First, Take the argument in the text, the plainness of the work of God, it is such as may be seen afar off, none can pretend ignorance of it, or if they do, that's a vain covert, or excuse; every man may see it, man may behold it asar off, as most worthy to be magnified.

Secondly, If we do not magnifie the work of God, God will

lessen his own works of mercy and favour toward us.

Thirdly, He will do no more for us if we magnifie not what he hath done. It is faid (Math. 13. 58.) Christ did not many mighty works there, because of their unbeleif. God will do no more mighty works for them, who refuse or negle & to pay him a tribute of praise and glory for what he hath done.

would be a war as the is no hard all decrections in him; the lines of the

1 O B , Chap. 36. Verf. 26.

26. Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out.

Liha having called upon Job to magnific the work of God in general, proceeds to draw him to the magnifying of the special works of God in naturals: Yet before he leads him to the confideration of the greatness of those works, he invites him to consider God himself who is the Author and Disposer of them, and he invites him to consider God in three things, all which we find laid down in this 26th verse.

First, In his Greatness; Behold God is great.

Secondly, In his Incomprehensibleness; He is great, and we know him not.

Thirdly, In his Eternicy: Neither can the unmber of his years

be searched out.

Surely he is most worthy our consideration who is great, and so great that he cannot be comprehended, and who is eternally great, whose years are numberless.

Vers. 26. Behold God is great.

The word Behold, is here a note both of Attention and admiration; O mind, O admire the greatness of God. God is great. The word rendred great, properly fignifies an encreasing growing greatness; God is without all encrease or growth, being for ever the same, yet he may be said to encrease, to be magnified magnus, multiplied (as I may say) according to the apprehensions which we have of him. This word bears the fignification both Septusginta of much and many. God is but one and the one-most one, yet (in legune viultus, this sence) many. So the Septuagint renders it here, he hath, or is many, that is, he hath all perfections in him; the lines of all Sim, arque on excellency and virtue, of all glory and perfection, center in God nibus perfetti- alone. Thus God is much, and God is many; the one God is many, he hath many, he hath all eminencies and excellencies bound up, boundlefly in him.

Again, God is great, in himself or in his being. Whatsoever is in God is God, and therefore what soever is in God is great. The

vobere. Druf. i. c. omnibus numeris perfeonibus cupu-

power of God is the powerful God, and therefore his power must needs be great; the wisdom of God is the wife God, and therefore his wisdom most needs be very great; the mercy of God is the merciful God, and therefore his mercy must needs be very great: And thus we may proceed in our meditations quite through all the divine Attributes.

And as God is great in his being, so he is great in his working, he doth great things. The Pfalmist laith, he is good, and doth good; he is also great, and doth great things; he is the fiff, the chief, and the best being, and his doings are such as he is, he doth like himfelf. God is great, and he hath an excellent, an excelling greatness. Praise bim (saith David, Pfal. 150. 2.) according to his excellent greatness, or as the words may well bear, according to his muchness of greatness; for when the Scripture saith, God is great, this positive is to be taken as a superlative, God is great, that is, he is greatest, he is greater than all, to great that all persons and all things are little, yea, nothing before him (Ifa. 40. 15.) Behold the nations are (to him but) as the deep of the bucket, and are counted but as the smal dust of the ballance: behold, he taketh up the Isles as a very little thing, they are as nothing, and they are counted to him as less than nothing and vanity. How great is God in comparison of whom the greatest things are little things, yea, the greatest things are nothing!

Behold, God is great. From this excellent Attribute, the greatness of God, I have made several Inferences already, at the 12th. verse of the 33d chapter; yet I shall infer some things further

here, both for our direction and confolation.

First, If God be great and greatest, then fear him greatly. Great is the Lord (faid David, in his thanksgiving-long, I Chron, 16. 25.) be also is to be feared above all gods; that is, above all the great powers on earth, and above all the imaginary powers of heaven. Idols, who are the fancied powers of heaven, are sometimes called gods in Scripture; so likewise are Princes or Magistrates, who are real powers on earth. Now, saith David (who was one of those gods, and a great one) fear him above all gods : Why? Because he is above all gods, he is higher than the highest and he is greater than the greatest; therefore fear him above all gods, yes, therefore fear, or worship him all ye gods (Pfal. 97.7.) Many say with their mouthes, God is great, yea, infinitely greater Bbb

than man, yet they fear men, especially great men, more than God.

Secondly, If God be great, then love him greatly. Shall this great God have but little love from us? The Law of love, with respect to God, is exprest two wayes in Scripture; first, as to the truth of it; and secondly, as to the measure or degree of it. The love which is given to God must be a true love, a fincere love, yet not only so, but the love which is given to God must be the greatest love; Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might, and with all thy frength; with all thy heart sincerely, with all thy might and strength greatly.

Thirdly, If God be great, then forve him greatly, or do him great service. Take heed of offering the lean and the lame, the halt and the blind to this great King. A great King must not be

put off with little services with small pittances of duty.

Fourthly, If God be great, then believe him greatly; let us have great faith in the great God. Jesus Christ rebukes his disciples (Mat. 8. 26.) O ye of little faith; have you God to pitch your faith upon, who is great? have you his power, and his mercy, and his truth, and his faithfulness, all which are great, to rest upon? and have you but a little faith? That woman (Mat. 15.28.) gave glory to God in believing, when she believed greatly; and therefore Christ cryeth up and magnifyeth the

greatuels of her faith, O woman, great is thy faith.

Fifthly, The great God is greatly to be praifed; he doth great things for us, therefore we must return great thanks to him. That also we have expressly (1 Chron. 16.25.) Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. The great God must have great praises, for he doth great things. As every fin we commit against God hath a greatness in it upon this consideration, because he is a great God against whom we sin (Take heed of the least sin, for that is great, being committed against the great God) so whatsoever dury (this of praise especially) we perform to God, we should strive to raise it up to the greatest, to the highest, because the great God, the high God is concerned in it, or it is consigned to the great, to the high God.

Sixthly, If God be great, we ought to give him great submission, or to submit greatly to him. Great submission to God is the sub-

stance of all duty to God. We owe the full submission of our wills to the Will of God in a twosold respect. First, to what o-ever he willeth us to do, or to his commanding will. Secondly, to whatsoever he will do with us, or to his disposing Will. In these, and in all things, let us strive to greaten all the actings of our souls towards God, because he is great.

Secondly, If God be great, then we may infer for confolation. First, Be not discouraged in prayer when you have great things to ask, when your wants are great, and your necessities urgent, when you must have great supplies, when small matters will not serve your turn (In many cases, it is not a little help, it is not a small matter which will do the thing which we sue unto God for) now here is a mighty ground of comfort for us, if we want great things, we have a great God to go unto; and how great foever our wants are, they are all but small to the greatness of that God unto whom we go (Ephel. 3. 20.) He is able to do exceeding abundantly above what we ask or think; and not only above what we actually ask and think, but indeed, beyond what possibly we can ask or think, above what we are able to ask or think. Therefore let us never be discouraged in prayer, because of the greatness of the things that we have to ask of God.

Secondly, Be not discouraged, though as your wants, so your dangers and your troubles are great. How great soever the danger is you would be delivered from, God is greater, to whom you come for deliverance: And therefore when a great Mountain stood in the way of the deliverance of the people of God (Zech. 4.7.) the Prophet speaks in this language, Who art thou? O great Mountain, thou shalt become a Plain before Zerubbabel; that is, before the power of that God in whom Zernbbabel trusts and whose work Zerubbabel carries on. Hence that holy confidence (Pfal. 66. 3.) Through the greatness of thy power, thine enemsies shall submit themselves to thee, or, they shall yeild feigned obedience, as we put in the margin, which some render thus, through the greatness of thy power, thine enemies shall be found liars. All the readings magnifie the greatness of God. Through the greatness of thy power thine enemies, the enemies of thy people, shall submit, they shall be found liars, they shall yeild feigned obedience, they shall not be able with all their greatness to stand it out against the great

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God.

God. Therefore be not discouraged at anytime at the greatness of danger. Though you walk through the very valley of the shadow of death (that's to be in the greatest danger) yet as Devid did not, so do not you fear, no not that great danger, while the great God is

with you. Thirdly, Be not discouraged though your sus are great when you come to ask the paraon of them. As the greatness of fin puts a ver great damp upon the spirit of man in asking pardon, so the greatness of God thould take off that damp. My thoughts are not your thoughts (faith the Lord Ifa. 55. 7,8,9.) in this matter. There is nothing wherein God doth more exceed man than in pardoning fin (Mic. 7. 18.) If fin be great, the mercy of God is great too, infinitely greater than the fin of man; if fin be great, remember we have a great high Priest (Heb. 4. 14.) not only a Priest, but a high Priest, and a great high Priest; therefore fear nor to ask the pardon, even of the greatest fin, in his name and for his sake. And this is true if we respect either national or personall fins; it may encourage us in asking pardon for nations, how great soever their sins are. Moses, when the People had greatly sinned against God, had recourse to this (Numb. 14. 18, 19.) The Lord is of great mercy; pardon I befeech thee the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of thy mercy, as thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt even until now. Do thus also with respect to personal fins. David made the greatness of his personal fin an argument to go to God for mercy (P(al. 25. 11.) Pardon my fin, O Lord, for it is great. He was so far from being disheartened by the greatness of his sin, to a k the pardon of it, that (according to our reading) he had great hope of pardon, as well as faw he had great need of pardon; and all because he knew God was great in mercy. Or, if we read that text thus, Pardon my fin, O Lord, though it be great, the sense is much the same; for as the former makes the greatness of his sin a reason provoking him to hasten unto God for pardon (as great diseases hasten us in seekingremedies) so the latter shews that the greatness of fin is no flop to the mercy and free grace of God in Christ, for the pardon

of it. Christ in that Parable (Mat. 18. 24.) gives instance of the greatest debt; he tells us of one that owed his Lord ten thousand talents, a vast sum, a very vast sum; a talent being, according to the lowest computation, three hundred pounds of money;

ten thousand times three hundred pounds is a huge sum; so that here was a great debt, now (saith the text) When the debtor had nothing to pay, he came to his Lord, or Creditor, and he for gave him all. He did not say, wouldest thou have me, or can I, for give such a debt as this? What, ten thousand talents? He for gave it as if it had been a debt of two mites. Thus, and many other wayes we may improve this first Attribute of God, mentioned in the text, his greatness, both as to our direction in duty, and consolatition in every extreamity. Beheld God is great,

And we know him not.

That's the second thing. The words are plain, but the tense is difficult; for it may be objected, Do not we know God? Elihu faid but just now, in the very verse before the text, Magnific his works which men behold, every man may see it, man may behold it afar off? Surely if the works of God may be known and feen by every one, God himself may be known, for he is known in his works, as the Apostle argues (Rom. 1. 20.) The things which he hath made make hisa known: how is this then said, That God is great and me know him not? Doth not the Prophet in denouncing that dreadful curse (Fer. 10. 25.) Poure out thy wrath upon the heathen that know theo not, thereby intimate, that all the people of God know him? Doth not Christ tell us (John 17.3.) This is eternal life, to know thee the onely true God. They who have eternal life, must have the knowledge of the true God. But all true believers have eternal life already in hope, and shall have it shortly in hand, therefore they know God. The Promise of the New Covenancis (Heb. 11.) They shall all know me from the least to the greatest; that is, all my Covenant people shall know me. How is it then said, God is great, and we know him not? When Paul was at Athens, he found an Alrar with that Inscription, To the unknown God (Alt. 17.23.) They worshipped a God whom they knew not, but certainly we must know whom we worship. Te worship ye know not what, was Christ's reproof of the Samaritans (John 4.22.) We know what we worship; that is whom we worship.

For answer to this, when the text saith, God is great and we know him not; we may say, First, That even heathens, the untaught, untutored, and uncatechized heathens do, or, may know God:

God, that is, they may know him in some degree or other, they may, yea, they do know him (as the Apostle saith, Rom. 1.20.) so far as to leave them without excuse; they have no plea, nor can they make any apologie for themselves. Secondly, 'Tis certain, all believers, I mean all true believers, know God savingly, or so far as is sufficient for their salvation. Every believer knows God. There is no faith in God without the knowledge of God. Thirdly, Which shall be the point of Observation from this part, as well as an answer to the question;

None know God fully, perfectly, comprehensively.

That's Elibu's meaning when he faith, God is great, and we know him not; that is, we know not how great he is, or we know not the utmost of his greatness. God only knoweth himself fully and comprehensively. There is no proportion between the greatness of God and the understanding of a man. The greatness of God is infinite, the understanding of a man is but finite and limited; the deepest understanding among men, yea, the understanding of Angels is but shallow, compared with God. Thus we are to understand this text. God is great, and we know him not. There is a greatness in every thing of God, transcending the polfibility of any created understanding. This some give for the reason, why the Seraphims spoken of (Isa. 6.) are said with two of their wings to cover their faces, they were not able to bear the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. For, though Christ, in that admonition which he gave, to take heed of offending and despising the little ones, gives this reason for it. (Mat. 18. 10.) For in heaven there Angels do alwayes behold the face of my Father which is in heaven; though (I say) it be a truth, that the holy Angels, and bleffed Saints above, do alwayes behold the face of God, yet neither Saints nor Angels, nor the Saints in glory, nor the glorious Angels, can fully comprehend the greatness and majesty of God; and therefore the Prophet (as was faid) represented the Angels covering their faces with their wings. We have heard of King Hiero putting the question to Simonides, a Philosopher, What God was, who defired (not being able to give a sudden answer) that the King would respit him till next day; when next day came he defired a fecond, and when that came he defired a third; and fill the more he fearched,

the farther he was from finding his answer. This is true, not only of Philosophers, who see but by the dark light of Nature, but of those who are enlightened divinely, or from above, they who receive much light from God, cannot comprehend the light of God; the more they search into it, the more they see themselves short of it. The most we know of God is not so much as the least part of that which we know not of him; and when we know as much of God as is knowable by man, yet it may be said, as in the text, God is great, and we know him not.

Hence take three brief Corolaries or Deductions,

First, If God be great and we know him not, that is, we are not able to comprehend him; then we must rest satisfied with what God hath manifested of himself and of his will. God hath manifested himself these four wayes. First, In his Word. Secondly, In his works of Creation and Providence. Thirdly, In his Son. Fourthly, By his Spirit. These wayes God is pleased to manifest himself, or make himself known unto his People; now what knowledge of God can be gathered up in these wayes, what can be learned of him out of his word, out of his works, by considering him in his Son, and by waiting for the help of his blessed Spirit, we must labour to take in; but take heed of a bold pressing into the secrets of God, or of a curious prying into the nature of God, which indeed will but dazle our eyes, and the more we think or look into it, the blinder we shall be.

Secondly, If God be so great that we know him not, Then we ought not presumptionally to enquire into a reason of the works and mayes of God; for that which is true of God himself, is true of his works and of his wayes, we cannot know them in the sence opened: Therefore the Apostle speaking about that wonderful dispensation of God, the laying aside of the Jemes and calling of the Gentiles (Rom. 11. 33.) cryeth out, O the depth of the knowledge and wisdom of God! how unsearchable are his Judgments, and his wayes past finding out! As God himself cannot be fully known,

so neither can his wayes nor works.

Thirdly, If God cannot be fully known, neither in himself, nor in his works, Then take beed of murmuring or complaining of the wayes, works, and dealings of God. Will you find fault with that which you neither do, nor can fully know? how little is it of any of the works of God, that we know! how little a way do we

fee into them! let us not find fault with that thing, the perfections whereof we cannot find out; fay not, why is it thus? why doth God let things go thus? why are his providences ordered thus? there are many such queryings in the hearts of men, and some such are exprest by the tongues of men. But remember the Lord cannot be known in his works, therefore let us not complain of his works, but, fitting down in filence, submit to them; let us (as David) Be dumb because God hath done it, (Pial. 39. 9.) David was filent, not only with respect to the foveraignty of God, who, he knew, had power and liberty to do whatfoever he pleafed, but with respect to his incomprehensibility, because he knew he was not able to know or understand the bottome-reason of that which God had done. This some conceive, the special intendment of Elihu in this Text, as reproving Job for his many complaints, and murmurings, and disputings about the dealings of God with him in the extremity of his sufferings: Therefore, said he, Consider

God is great, and we know him not.

Yet let none be discouraged in seeking after the knowledge of God, because 'tis told us we cannot know God; yea let no man think to excuse himself in his neglect of pursuing the knowledge of God, because this Text saith we cannot know him. Some posfibly will fay, If God be so great, that we cannot know him, then why should we labour after the knowledge of God? or we hope this will excuse us, if we do not know him, seeing we cannot. Take heed of such reasonings; for though God cannot be known to the utmost of what himself is, yet God ntay be known so far as is needfull for us, and that is very far. We may know God so far as concerns our duty to him, and our happiness by him; we may know God so far as to honour him, and to enjoy him: and we must labour to know him perfectly, though we cannot. The Apostle speaking of the love of God (Eph. 3. 17.) would have us labour to comprehend with all Saints, the heighth, the bredth, the depth, the length, and to know the love of Christ that passeth knowledge. That the love of Christ passeth knowledge, that it exceeds our understanding, should not discourage us from labouring to know it; nor will it excuse any that fit down idly, and do not study the knowledge of God, though he paffeth knowledge; we must labour to know the greatness of Gods love, and the greatness of Gods wisdome, and the greatness of Gods power, though the

greatness of God in all these is greater than our narrow hearts can comprehend. Behold, God is great, and weknow him not,

Neither can the number of his years be learched ont.

The Text is, Number of his years, no fearch; that is, as we well Numerous annotranslate it, the number of his years is such as cannot be searched, rum ejus, or we say, searched out; it is but one word in the Hebrew, properly stigation signifying, to search a thing to the bottome, that we may find out the utmost of it. The number of Gods years cannot thus be searched out, we cannot find them to the bottome. Blibu speaks of God after the manner of men; years prope. ly belong to man, and the things here below of this world: the life of man, and the continuance of the creature, are measured by houres, and dayes, and weeks, and months, and years, as these are measured by the motion of the Heavens. But God is far above any such rule or measure of life, or of his being, all these measures are improper unto God; there's no measuring him by houres, dayes, weeks, months or years, or ages. The word which we translate years, fignifieth changes. Years are changed or returned; there is a returne of the same time every year, Spring and Summer, and Autumn and Anustaput He-Winter; thus the year changeth, and turnes about continually. breos (730) God is infinitely above all these changes and turnings of time expus proprie-(Pfal. 102.25, 26, 27.) The heavens wax old, and as a vesture tate et Etymo-thou shall change them, and they shall be changed, but thou art the logia nomen halt change them, and they shall be changed, but thou art the hatet a mutasame, and thy years fayle not. The years of God are not like the cione, quasidisyears of the world, which wear it our, and change it as a vesture, cour viutatoriis changed by time; the Lord is for ever the same. Thus one of M. Ab hacrathe Ancients gloffeth those words of the Pialme, Thy years sayle dice vestes not: Thy years (faith he) neither go nor come; thy years fand all משנים, nam together, for because they kand, they that go are not excluded by mutantur vethem that come; thy years are one day, and thy day is not day by terascunt innoday, but to day; they to day doth not give place to to-morrow, nor doth vantur; et it succeed to yesterday; thy to day is eternity, therefore thou hast quod vestire beget thy co-eternal, to whom thou laidest, to day have I begotten (IReg.14.2.) thee. So then this expression, Neither can the number of his years be fearched out, is, according to our apprehension and understanding, a description not only of very old age, but of eternity. We Augustinus would think that man very old, the houres, weathe minutes of in Pfal. 102, whose life could not be searched out by a good Arethmetician, v. 28.

Aternitas tempora omnia fine ulla succesfions comple-Stite Y Eternitas of vitæ bestæ rota simul er perfella posses fio. Boetius. Aternum est unum esse, et kotum simul effe, et nibil deeffe. Greg. i. 16. Moral. C- 21. Eternum est immu abile et totum impartibiliter. Dionys: cap. 10.

de divinis

Nomin:

much more easily may we tell how many years the oldest man hath lived: What then shall we think of him the number of whose years cannot be searched out ? this can speak nothing less than everlastinguels. And this eternity or everlastinguess of God, though it be impartible, yet it hath, I may fay, a double respect : First, to what went before; Secondly, to what is to come. The eternity of God is such as cannot be searched out, either as to what is past, or to what is to come; indeed unto God there is nothing path or to come; for eternity, properly taken, is an everlasting Now, it is not that which passeth or moveth away; and therefore forme of the Ancients elegantly describe eternity, to be the perfect enjoymens of bleffed life all at once; which because it is all at once together and perfect, cannot be altered nor lessned. In eternity that which is past is present, year that which is to come is present in an eternal bleffed life. Tis fo with God, and fo in proportion with all those who are entred into eternity, whatsoever they have had is alwayes present with them, nor are they in the expectation of any thing to come; they enjoy all in every moment, without the want of any thing. Tis much more to with God; though years have succession, yet the years of God have no succession of times or things.

Further, The eternity of God, which lies under this description, The Number of his years cannot be searched out, is not a particular attribute of God, but that which disuseth it self through all his attributes; he is eternall in all; there is no fearthing out the Number of the years of any of the perfections of God; his Wisdome is eternal, and his Power is eternal, and his Goodness is eternal, and his Justice is eternal; there is no searching out the Number of the years of God in any of these persections.

Hence Note; God is an eternal being;

His years come not under account, or number. God is eternal, not only without end, as created Spirits are, but without beginning, which no creature is, nor can be; He is eternal, not only without end or beginning, but without succession or mutation. Some of the Ancients tell us, Eternity flands fast, but moves all suntla moveri, other things. The evernal God is the first Mover, himself being Boetide Con- immoveable. If so, then Firft,

___ Stabilifq; fol Metro. o First, All things are alwayes present wish or before God: Things past, things to come are present with God, he were not eternal esse. In that eternity or eternal essate of glory which believers shall at last arive unto, even they shall enjoy all at once, because all their enjoyments shall be in God, or God shall be their whole

enjoyment.

Secondly, God is infinitely happy and bleffed. He hath all that ever he had, or that ever he can have, all at once, or already, nothing of his blessedness is either to come to him or gone from him; therefore he must needs be infinitely blesled. Here in this world some men have had a kind of blesledness, they have been rich and great, they have been in power, they have had their fill of pleasure, but now they have it not, all is perished and gone and past away. There are others in expectation of great matters, of great riches, of great honours, of great conten ments in this world, but as yet they have them not; we say of many, Their lands are not come into their hands, their estate is but yet in reversion and expectation. Thus it is with men; some have had ir, and it is gone, and others though they may have it, yet it is not come. But now with the Lord all is present, and therefore how infinitely happy is he! A man would think himself very happy if he could have all the contentments that ever he had scattered through the several dayes and years of his life gathered into one moment; it is thus with God, and thus in proportion it shall be with us, when we come to that bleffed state of eternity.

Thirdly, If God be eternall, if there be no fearthing out of

his years, then

Time is in the dispose and ordering of God. He that inhabiteth eternity, is the Lord of time. God is said to inhabite eternity, (Isa. 57. 15.) that is, he is eternall, and therefore he is the disposer of all times; he that made time will order time: he ordereth time as to persons, and he orders time as to Nations, he orders times, and all the changes of times, he ordereth, not only the duration of time, but the condition of times; all is from him, whose years cannot be searched out. David said (Psal. 31. 15.)

My times are in thy hands, that is, my personal times in all the changes of them, troublesome or comfortable, joyfull or sorrowfullare ordered at thy will, by thy power and wisdome. And with respect to Nations Daniel said (Chap 2. 21.) He changeth times

and seasons. The Lord puts a new face of things upon States and Kingdomes; what changes hath not, cannot the Lord make among the tons of men? The reason of all is, he is eternall.

Fourthly, If there be no fearthing out the number of the

years of God, if he be eternall, then

How ought we to reverence and adore God! We have a Command from God to reverence those who have attained many years in this world, which alass are very few, none at all to the years of God; the aged, the gray-headed must be reverenced, (Lev. 19. 32.) And one reason of that Law may be, because the aged have some shadow of Gods eternity upon them; they who have many years have some resemblance of him, the number of whose years cannot be searched out; therefore God will have them reverenced. Now if the ancient are to be reverenced, how much more God himself, who is called (Dan. 7.9.) The ancient of

dayes !

Fifthly, If God be eternall, then, we may trust him, yeatherefore we ought to trust him, (Pial.74.12.) Thou art my King of old, commanding deliverances. O how did Davids confidence a tife upon this, that God who was King of old, is King now, and will be King for ever, (Pfal. 10. 16.) The Lord is King for ever and ever; the Heathen are perished out of his Land, that is, they shall furely perish. God will not alwayes bear with evill men in his Land; For if because God was King of all the Lands, he therefore drave the old Heathen out of Canaan, and planted his people there; doubtless, if they who bear the name of his people there, live so like the old Heathen that they may be called Heathen, he will also cause them to perish out of his Land, and all because he is King for ever and ever, and therefore can do it at one time as well as at another, and now as eafily as at any time heretofore. Trast in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting Brength, (1sa. 26. 4.) David a Great Prince makes it an argument to draw of our trust from men, from the greatest men, from Princes, because they are not for ever, (Pfal. 146. 3, 4.) Trust not in Princes, nor in any Children of men; why not? many reasons may be given why not; but the only reason there given is their frailty, and the consequents of it; His breath goeth forth, &c. As if he had faid, Suppose Princes are never so good, and just, and gracious in the exercise of their Power, yet trust not in them,

for they die, their breath goeth forth, and then all their thoughts perish: all the reall purposes which they had, as also the promites which they made for your good, die with them, and can do you no good: The number of their years may be fearched our, and run out, their years are not for ever. Now the contrary of that which is an argument used by the Spirit of God to draw off our trust from the gods here on Earth, is an argument to draw on and engage our trust strongly to the God of Heaven; His breath goeth not forth, none, not one of his thoughts shall perish; there-

fore trust in him.

Sixthly, If there be no fearthing out the number of the years of God, then, Be not troubled if God seem to stay and not to do the work which you expect this or that year: If God doth it not this year, he hath another year to do it in, there is no fearthing out the number of his years. We may fay of any man if he doth not his work this year, he may be gone before the next: but if God doth not his work this year, he may do it next year, or two or ten years hence; he hath time enough, even all time before him: therefore the Prophet, having said (Hab. 2. 3.) The vision is for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie, presently adds, Though it tarry, wait for it: As if he had said, The Lord who hath all times and feafons in his power, will do his work in the best time and season, he will do what he hath promised, when it is most fit to be done; if he doth it not at the time when we expect, yet let us wait, he is the Master of time. God who is eternal, cannot be scantied of time, The number of his years cannot be fearched out. 'Tis a known maxime among the wife men of the world, Take time, and you may do any thing. What cannot God do, who knoweth all times, and can take what time he

Seventhly, Which followeth upon the former, God mill carry on his designes through all the world: He will carry them through, against all, (Pfal. 92. 8, 9.) Thou Lord art most high for evermore; Lo, thine enemies shall perish; thine enemies who would hinder thy work, they shall certainly fall. Christ is called The first and the last; He (saith St John, Rev. 1.17.) laid his right hand upon me, and said, fear not, I am the first and the last: Why should he not fear? what did Christ offer to cure him of his fear? Christ doth not give him a bare disswasive, Fear not, but a

rational

rational ground why he should not fear. Fear will not be blown away with a breath: Our passions are never truly quieted nor attempered but by reason. Upon what ground then would Christ take off Johns fear, even upon this in the Text, I am the first and the last. As if he had said, John why doest thou fear? knowest thou not who I am, what a Lord and Master thou servest? Why, John, I tell thee, I am the first and the last; and therefore thou mayest be sure, I will do my work, and none shall lett me. John had wonderfull things in vision; shall all these be done thought he? yea, saith Christ, Fear not, I will carry on my designes (all the designes that Christ had in the world were then in vision) Eternity triumphs over all difficulties; The Eternall will see the last man born, (as we say) he will have the last word, and the last blow. I am the first and the last.

Lastly, From this Consideration of God, let us take a prospect of our selves, what poor short lived short-breathed Creatures we are. There is no searching out the number of the years of God, but we may quickly search out the number of our own years; our life is but a span long, (Psal. 39.5.) yea our age is nothing before God. Did we consider the eternity of God, what should we judge of our span-long life? we are said to be of yesterday. Some expresse man thus; Heis yesterday; as if he were not to day, but were already past while he is. The best that can be said of him is this; he is but of yesterday, and possibly he shall not have a to morrow: but the Lord is for ever and ever the same.

And though we are short-lived as to this world, though our years may soon be told over, yet let us remember that God hath called us to the participation of eternity; though we have not the eternity of God, which is without beginning, yet we shall have an eternity from God without end; every man is everlasting as to his soul. The godly shall be blessed for ever; and there is an eternal estate of wo and misery to the wicked, the number of the years of their forrows and sufferings, who live and die without Christ, cannot be searched out. The number of the years of the joy and blessedness, and rest and happiness, and tranquility of those that believe, of those that are faithfull, of those that are godly, of those that walk with and fear God, I say the number of the years of their joy and happiness cannot be searched out neither. No man can number or tell how long-lasting the felicity of Saints

Saints shall be. As the number of the years of God cannot at all be fearched out, so he hath given man as to his future estate a numberless number of years: And it were well if we who enjoy this life, and are dying every moment, would often confider there is a life coming which will never die, the number of our years also in that sense cannot be searched out.

The thoughts of eternity should swallow up all out time; yet alais, how doth time, or the things which are but temporary, [wallow up, in most men, the thoughts of eternity! What-ever we do in time, should be to fit us for eternity; yet alass, most use their time so, as if they did not believe, or at least hoped, there would not be, any fuch thing as eternity. Did we but spend two or three minutes of time every day in the ferious remembrance of our eternal estate, it would be an effectual means, to make us both holy in and contented with what-ever temporal estate we meet with in this world. We should be earnestly searching after God all our dayes, did we confider what it imports to us, that the number of his years cannot be searched out.

Thus Elibu labours to draw Job to the confideration of God himself, who is the Author of those great providential works, both of those he had spoken of before, the works of providence, ordering men here in civils, as also of those works of providence in natural things, of which he comes to treat largely, both in the latter part of this Chapter, and in most of the next. Where we shall find Elibu giving us as it were a Systeme, or body of natural Philosophy in his discourse about the wonderfull works of God, which he is calling Job to consider.

an region and the day for in this and the Pollowia. Chara-te peaks lette, I fav. ov. 'e Ralle, which is a chief need a south

When the world the first of the

J O B, Chap. 36. Vers. 27, 28.

27. For he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof; 28. Which the clouds do drop, and distill upon man abundantly.

Elibu having shewed the greatness of God himself, in the former verse, proceeds to shew the greatness of his works; he had done it before as to Civil Administrations, and the ordering of humane affaires, in casting down and listing up the sons of men; he doth it now in natural things, or in ordering the motions of nature, still in reference unto man. He describes the greatness of the works of God alost or above in the Aire and in the Clouds, as he had before described the greatness of his

works here below on the Earth.

The whole remainder of Elihu's speech in this Chapter and to the end of the 37th, is spent in a philosophical discourse about the Meteors, and those various operations and changes that are wrought in the Aire; he discourfeth of Rain, of Thunder and Lightning, of Snow and Winds; from all which works of God in Nature, Elihu would convince Fob of the Justice and Righteousness of God (as well as of his power) which was his chief purpose. He begins this philosophical Lecture or Lecture of divine Philosophy with the Rain, in the two verses now read; and he mingles much of that matter in this and the following Chapter. He speaks here, I say, of the Rain, which is a dispensation of God usually both very profitable & comfortable; what more profitable or more comfortable than the rain? It is also a dispensation of God sometimes very dreadfull and hurtfull: The Lord sends the very fame Creature upon contrary services, sometimes for good, sometimes for evill; at one time as a bleffing, and at another as a curle, to the inhabitants of the earth.

What Elihu speaks of the Rain in this Chapter, may be redu-

ced to five heads.

First, He sheweth the manner of it's formation and generation, v. 27, 28.

Secondly,

Secondly, The vafiness or huge extent of the vessels containing it, which are the clouds of the aire, spreading themselves all the Heavens over, v. 29.

Thirdly, He tells us of the sudden changes and successions of

rain and faire weather, of a cloudy and ferene sky, v. 30.

Fourthly, He fets forth the different purpoles of God in difpenfing the rain, which are sometimes for judgement, sometimes for mercy, v. 31, 32.

Fifthly, He incimates the Prognosticks of it, or what are the

fignes and forerunners or foretellers of ir, v. 33.

The two verses under-hand, hold out the first poynt, the formation and generation of the rain.

Vers. 27. He maketh small the drops of water.

That is, God (as it were) coynes and mints out the water into drops of rain: As a mighty masse of gold or silver is minted out into small pieces, so a huge body of water is minted out into fmall drops; that's the fum of these words according to our rendring. The Hebrew word rendred, He maketh small, hath a twofold fignification, and that hath caused a three-fold translation of these words.

First, It signifiesh to take away, or, to withdraw; according to this fignification of the word, a two-fold power of God is held val adenti,

forth about the drops of water.

First, The power of God in drawing the water up from the Substracti de-Earth to make rain, for that in Nature (as we shall see after- in stillas agus. wards) is the cause of rain; God draws up the water from the rum, sc: em ma-Earth, which he fends down upon the Earth: he draws up the va- ri, flumini us pours, and the vapours become a Cloud, and the Cloud is diffol et loci humida, ved into rain.

Secondly, The word may very well expresse, according to bem ejos. Hauother rexts of Scripture, the putting forth of the power of God flux vapor en in stopping, staying, keeping back and with holding rain from aqua cogitur in the earth; when God hath drawn water from the earth, he can nubern, que defined fundit plus hold it from the earth as long as he pleaseth. The Chaldee Para-viam. Merl: phrase saith, He forbids the drops to mater the earth, or he fends Qui au'en filforth a prohibition to the clouds that they give no mater. The vul- las pluvia. gar Latine speaks to the same sence, who takes away drops of rain, Vulg. that is, from the earth. Mr. Broughton renders, he withdraws Ddd dropping

Substrazit.

qua fundient phuviam ad nudropping of water. In this sence I find the word rendred expressly (Numb. 9.7.) where certain persons are brought in by Moses thus complaining, Wherefore are we kept back that we may not offer an offering to the Lord with the children of Israel? It is a case; there were some, it seems, suspended from bringing their offerings to the Lord, and they demand a reason of it; to give which, Moses saith, stand still, and I will hear what the Lord will command concerning you. But I quote that scripture only for the force of the word, wherefore are we kept back, or with-held, which was for some uncleanness. Thus you have the first signification of the word, and a double translation upon it, both very pertinent to the nature of the rain, and the Lords dealing with man in it, which is the subject Elihu is insisting upon.

Minuit, diminuis. Secondly, The original word fignifies to diminish, or lessen, or make a thing small; so 'tis rendred (Exod. 5. 8.) when the children of Israel complained that they were oppressed in making brick. This commandement came from Pharaoh, The tale of bricks which they did make heretofore, you shall lay upon them, you shall not diminish ought of it. It is this word. Again (Deut. 4.2.) To shall not add to the word which I command you, neither shall you diminish ought from it. Man must not make the word of God smaller or greater than it is. 'Tis high presumption to use either subtraction from, or addition to the word of God. Thus also the word is used in the case of second or double marriages (Exod. 21. 10.) If he take him another wise, her food (that is the food of the first wise) her raiment, and her duty of marriage shall he not diminish.

Our translators take up this sense of the word as noting the diminishing of a thing in the quantity of it. He makes h small the drops of mater, or, he makes the water fall in small drops; whereas if the water were lest to it self, it would poure down like a sea, or like a flood to sweep all away. This is the work of God, and though it be a common, yet it is a wonderful work; He maketh small the drops of rain. A drop is a small thing, and therefore the Prophet when he would shew what a small thing, or indeed, what a nothing man is, yea, all the nations of the earth are to God, saith (Usa. 40. 15.) The nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the ballance. Behold, he taketh up the Isles as a very little thing. The Spirit of God pitch-

maketh small

eth upon this comparison, when he would set forth that great distance between God and man. Man is but a drop to God. But are not all drops farall? why then doth he fay, He maketh small the drops? The reason is because, though all drops are small, yet fome drops are smaller than others, and we read of great drops in the Gospel History of Christs agony in the Garden, which was an immediate suffering in his soul, from the hand of his Father, presfing him with that weight of wrath, which was due for our fins (Luke 22.44.) Hesweat, as it were, great drops of blood. As God made Christ swear great drops of blood for our fins, so he makes

the Clouds to sweat small drops of water for our comfort. He

The drops of rain.

The Verb of this Substantive is used (Joel 3.18.) In those Guttavit, guadayes it shall come to pass, that the mountaines shall drop down new wine; by which we are to understand, the plentiful effusion of the Spirit promised in the latter dayes. David describing the Lords glorious march thorow the wilderness, saith (Pfal. 68. 8, 9.) The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of the Lord; thou, O God, didst fend a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance when it was weary. Which Scripture principally intends the spiritual rain, which drops down upon believers, and refresheth their wearied souls: And therefore by a Meraphor, this phrase, to drop, signifies, to prophesie or preach the word of God; because that, like rain, falls filently, and as it were in drops upon the hearers, it falls in at the ear, and foaks Pracepium andown to the hearr, it foaks quite thorow, as Moses spake (Dent. ri-ulis hoe in-32.2.) My doctrine shalldrop as the rain, and my speech shall destil io. Horat Lib. as the dew. And as the word is used in Prophesies of mercy and r. Ep. & instruction, so of judgment and desolation. Thus the Lord charged his Prophet (Ezek. 20.46.) Son of man, set thy face towards the south, and drop thy words towards the south, and prophe e against the forest of the south field. Again (Ezek. 21.2.) Son of man, set thy face towards Ferusalem, and drop thy words towards the holy place, and prophese against the land of Israel. Once more (Amos 7.16.) Drop not thy word against the house of Isaac. So that, I say, this dropping is used frequently, as in a natural, so in a spiritual sence. He maketh [mall the drops

Ddd 2

Of

Forma duali, fignificantur equæ duplices.

Rabbi Selo. exponit,

Der .

ירבה

dum ita guttatim aquæ deci-

dust multipli-

cantur. Merc.

Of water.

The word is of the Dual Number in the Hebrew, and so it fignifies both forts of water; the waters of heaven, and the waters of the earth, the upper and the nether waters, the upper waters in the Clouds, and the nether waters in the Springs. We find them spoken of together in the first of Genesis at the 7th verse; God divided the waters which were under the firmament, from the waters which were above the firmament. We find the upper waters spoken of singly (Pfal. 104. 3.) Who layest the beams of the chambers in the maters; Chambers are above. And in the first of Genesis at the 9th verse, we find the lower waters alone; Let the waters be gathered together under the heavens. Under-heaven waters are the lower waters. One of the Rabbies renders the words thus; He multiplieth the drops of rain; and the reason of it is multiplicat, quia (which falls in with our translation) because the less any one thing is made, the more is the general mass, out of which it is made, multiplied.

From the words thus far opened, we may note somewhat for

our instruction.

Taking the former fignification of the words, He draweth up the drops of water,

> Observe; The ordinary rain which watereth the earth, is first fetched from the earth.

Pluviseft vapor calidus & humidu ex arum, ufque ad mediam aevu regionem eleva-110, Or ibiprocondensatus, &c. Garc. de Meteorol.part 2. cap. 25.

God raiseth vapours from the earth, and then watereth the earth with them. All the rain which falls upon the earth was raifed from the earth. If I were to answer that question in nature, quis de locis hu- What is Rain? I might resolve it thus; Rain is the moisture of the Solis & Stella earth, drawn up by the heat of the Sun, into the middle Region of the Air, which being there condensed into clouds, is afterwards at the will of God, disfolved, and dropt down again in showers. The Clouds, at the command of God, hold fast, and at his command they break pro locifrigidi- and let out their waters upon the earth. This is, as was toucht beratem in nubem fore, a very ordinary, yet a very admirable work of God. As in spirituals, all those acts of grace in faith, and love, and joy, &c. by which our hearts and fouls are carried up to heaven, come first om heaven; so that rain which comes down upon us from heaven, was first fetched from among us by the mighty power of God. Rain, according to natural Philosophy, is thus generated: The water and moissure of the earth being attenuated by the heat of the Sun-beams, become vapours, which being so rarified and resolved into an airy substance, are by the same heat of the Sun drawn up to the middle region of the air, where being again condensed or thickened into water, they maelt down into rain, at

the appointment of God.
We may consider rain briefly in all the causes of it; Thus:

First, The efficient cause of rain is God.

Secondly, The instrumental cause is the heat of the Sun.

Thirdly, The material cause is the moisture of the Sea and watery Land.

Fourthly, The final cause of it, is, I. Supream; the glory of God. 2. Subordinate; and that threefold. First, the benefit. Secondly, the punishment. Thirdly, the instruction of man.

Secondly, From that other fignification of the word, as it notes withdrawing or keeping back, upon which some infift much,

Observe; God when he pleaseth can with-hold the water or the rain.

He can give a stop to the rain, and then the clouds yeeld us no more water than a stone; He with-holds the drops of water. The Lord threateneth the Vineyard with this stop (Isa. 5.6.) I will command the clouds, that they rain no rain upon it; which is true of a natural and proper Vineyard, and of proper natural rain, though it be meant there of the people of God, whom he metaphorically, or improperly, calleth his Vineyard; and the rain there intended, is the rain of inftruction usually falling upon them. Now as God doth often forbid the showers of the word, that they fall no more upon a people, as he fends forth a prohibition to stop the spiritual rain; so he also stops and prohibits the natural rain (Amos 4.7,8.) I have with-holden the rain from you, when there was yet three moneths to the harvest; and I cansed it to rain upon one city, and cansed it not to rain upon another city; one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered: sutwoor three cities wandered unto one city to drink water, but were not satisfied. Thus in case of disobedience to his divine Law. Law, the Lord threatened to stop the common Law of nature, and to make the heavens brass, and the earth iron (Dent. 28. 23.) And when the heavens are brass, that is, when they yeeld no more moisture than brass, then the earth is as iron, that is, it yeelds no more food for the suffernation of man or beast, than a bar of iron doth. Such stops the Lord hath often put upon the courses of nature, and can do again when he pleaseth; though I believe he never did, nor ever will do so, but when highly displeased and provoked by the sin of man.

Take two or three inferences from it.

First, If the rain or drops of mater come not in their season, let us acknowledge the hand of God. It is God that hath lockt up the clouds when-ever they are lockt up; God hath forbidden the clouds to let down their rain when-ever they with-hold it. Men

and Devils can no more stop the rain than make it.

Secondly, When we want rain, let us go to God for it. 'Tis the prerogative of God alone to help us in that streight; and therefore the holy prophet fends a chalenge to all other powers, or declares them disabled for this help (fer. 14. 22.) Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain, or can the heavens give showers? neither the one nor the other can. The heavens cannot dispose of a drop, though they possesse a sea of water. God must hear the heaven, before the heavens can hear the earth, that is, answer the necessities of the earth. And as the heavens cannot give man rain, so neither can the gods of mans making and placing there, fuch are all the vanities or vain Idols of the Gentiles. The prophet having shewed us that these cannot, sheweth us who can give rain in the next words, Art not thou he, O Lord, our God (surely thou art he) therefore we will wait upon thee, for thou hast made all these things. Solomon, at the dedication of the Temple, puts this as one special case wherein they were to apply to God by prayer (1 Kings 8.35.) When heaven is shut up and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee, If they pray, &c. then hear thou in heaven. The prophet fends the people in that exigent to God (Zec. 10 1.) Ask ye of the Lord rain, in the time of the later rain. As if he had faid, if ye would have rain, you must ask for it, and be sure ye ask it of none but him; a k of the Lord. As it is God that gives out or with-holds the rain, so he gives it out or with-holds it at the voice of prayer. The Apostle saith of Elias (Jam. 5. 17.) he was a man Subject

subject to the like passions that we are, and be prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth, by the space of three years and fix months; and he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain. At his word the Lord stope rain, and at his word he gave rain. Let us therefore confess that God is the author or father of the rain; He causeth vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth, he maketh lightnings for the rain (Pf. 135.7.) He covereth the heaven with clouds, he prepareth rain for the earth (Pf. 147.8.) God covereth the heaven with clouds, by drawing up vapours from the earth, which are the matter of these clouds, and in those clouds he prepares the rain, & by the rain sent down makes the grass to grow upon the mountains. The encrease of vegetables is the effect of rain; God hath the rain in his power, and to acknowledge him in it is our duty. Tis a great part of our spiritualness to acknowledge God Dew sibi Solt in naturals as well as spirituals; or, that the key of the clouds, as clavem pluvide well as the key of the heart, is in the hand of God, and in his on- referval Targ. ly. One of the Antients speaking to this point, said, Let ment Hierosolin ascribe rain to the Saints, much less to Witches. Papists have their cap. 3. Gen. Saints to whom they pray for rain, and Atheifts go to Witches for rain. The modest and moderate Heathen will rise up against such in judgement; they ascribed rain to their gods though false gods; they had Epethites or Titles of Honour for their Idols, testifying Imbriferi, feretheir faith in them and dependance upon them for the showers of natores. heaven, they called them shower-bringing gods, and fair-weathermaking gods. If heathens would yet ascribe the rain to their gods, not to men, not to any inferiour powers, how abominable are they, who professing the knowledge of Jehovah, the only true God, do not acknowledg him alone in this! In times of drought many will fay, We hope we shall have rain when the Moon changeth, or, when the Wind turns; now though there be somewhat in nature, both in the change of the Moon and turn of the Winds, as to the change of weather, yet to speak much of, or expect any thing from either, argues some withdrawing of the heart from God; and God to shew the folly of such, hath often with-held the rain, though the Moon hath changed more than once, and the Wind turned to all quarters, and passed through all poynts of the Compaís.

Thirdly, Let us take heed of provoking the Lord; he can quickly stop our Comforts, those common outward comforts, the rain and fhomrs.

shows of heaven, and then (as to this Life) in how sad a case are we ! As the Lord hath not left himself without witness (namely of his goodness) in sending rain and fruitful seasons, so he can quickly leave a witness of his Justice, and displeasure, or of his just displeasure, by with-holding rain and (as a consequent of that) fruitful seasons from us. Were it only to have rain and fruitful seasons, we should take heed of displeasing God. If a man had fuch power as to with-hold rain from your land, you would take heed of dipleasing him. How dangerous then is it to provoke God, who cannot only with-hold the rain from your land, but can, as the Scripture faith, make the rain of your land to be powder and dust (Deut. 28. 24.) that is, give you powder and dust instead of rain! When the rain is long with-holden the earth grows hard, and being much trodden or traveled on, dufty; this duft being raised up by the wind, shall come down in stead of rain, or that's all the rain which I will give you. The Lord hath our natural comforts in his hand, as well as our spiritual and eternal.

Further, As this with-holding of the rain sometimes, so the holding up of the rain at any time, shews the great power of God; to hold the water in the aire is the work of God as much as to withhold it from the earth. The water is a heavy body, and all heavy things tend downward: is it not a wonder that such a mighty weight of water should hang in the aire, and be there held up? if it were not held there, it would not stay there, but come down and drown all. What holds it up? the Cloud is a thin substance, yet it holds the water as well as the strongest vessel bound with hoopes of iron; But by what power? doubtless by the power of God. The water hath no confistence in it self, it is a fluid slippery body, now what can hold the water that none of it leakes out, but the power of God? There are many millions of drops in one little cloud, and every drop is of it felf ready to flip away, yet the whole cloud yeelds no more water then a rock till God orders it. Let us contemplate the Almightiness of God, who can hold such a mighty body of water in the aire, or who (as Fob spake, Chap. 26. 8.) bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent un-

These notes arise from that translation, which imports the Lords power in drawing the water from the earth, as also in with-holding it from the earth when there is need, and in holding it when there is no need.

We

We translate, He maketh small the drops of water. Not only hath God made the body of the water, which is one of the four general Elements, of which all bodies are compounded and made, but he makes the water into small drops, or maketh small the drops of

Hence note;

That the water falls from heaven by drops, comes to pass by the especial power, wisdom and goodness of God.

The water, if left to it self, would fall whole like a sea upon us, or like a mighty floud, in such quantities as would, instead of refreshing, overwhelm the earth. When God drowned the world, ic is said (Gen. 7. 11.) The same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows (or flood-gates) of heaven were opened. We are not to imagine that heaven hath windows or floodgates; but God did not put forth his mighty power to make small the drops of rain, but let it come all at once : those waters which were before bound up in the clouds, by the decree of God, were now, by his decree, let loofe in a wonderful manner and measure, and came down, not in drops, but in streames and spouts ; the clouds did not (as formerly) destil their burden, but ease them- Pluvia in nufelves of it at once, or altogether. Rain ordinarily (as sweat bibus, velut in through the Pores of the skin) passeth by degrees through the limeo contine-Pores of the Clouds, yet God can let it out all at once. Sea-men, tur, arque who take long Voyages, tell us, they meet with spouts of water, in illuvelut who take long great ships. So then, this making small the drops of taim distillution water, is to be ascribed to a threefold Attribute of God.

First, It is a work of his power, nor is it done without a kind of Miracle, that the water comes down, as it were, through a five,

or watering-pot.

Secondly, It is a work of divine wisdom. The Lord knowing that the earth cannot digest huge portions of water at once, divides it into little portions, that the earth may gradually receive and let it foak into its bosom, for the feeding of Plants, and the supply of all creatures that live upon ir.

Thirdly, 'Tisa work also of divine Goodness; for if God did not make small the drops of water, if it should come down whole it would drown the earth, inflead of comforting and fattening it. Behold then, the Power, Wildom and Goodness of God in making small the drops of water!

Though

394

et per illa føje exchibet dem. Merc:

PPI fundit, fundendo pur-

gavit affive,

plu.ia.

Fagius in

Gen:

Though Philotophers have attempted to find out and affigne a reason in Nature, about this falling of the rain in drops, yet they have not fully attained the reason why, nor the manner how, God doth this; we must ascribe it chiefly to the power, wisdome, and goodness of God, in ordering it for the benefit of man, yea of all Plane admira. living creatures. And furely Eliku leads us to confider the wonders bilem et tre- of those things which are common and naturall, to convince us, mendum in Ms that for a much as we cannot clearly see the reason of those lesser things, we should take heed of prying into greater and remoter fecrets; and he would have Fob particularly know, that feeing he could not find out the way of God in these natural things, much less could he find out the way and whole designe of God in those his providential dealings with him: He maketh small the drops of water; and then as it followeth in this verse,

They pour down rain according to the vapour thereof.

Though the water be made into small drops, yet he doth not say, they drop down, but they pour down rain; that is, the drops fall plentifully; that frequent expression, in Scripture, of pouring down, every where implyeth plenty or abundance. The promise of pouring out the Spirit in the latter dayes, notes the abundance of the Spirit that shall then be given. The word signifies also to itempercolatus straine, implying that the rain is contained in the Clouds, as it excolatm, de were in a linnen cloath, which being pressed, distills the water in factor fuit. small streams or drops, as it were through a strainer. They pour Imber, nimbus down

Rain.

There are three words in the Latine, the first of which notes a bine Tipe flowre or gentle rain; the fecond, a flormy or fierce rain; the verbum transi- third, rain in generall. Rain, in this place, may be taken in all or tivum in Hi- either of these notions, for at one time or other the Clouds pour phil significat, down drops into all fores of rain. Rain (as I said) is made of vacerte innuitur pours drawn up, and here he faith, They pour down rain deum effe Au-

According to the vapour thereof.

shorem phuia. There are two forts of vapours; there are dry vapours, and moist vapours: dry vapours (say Naturalists) are the matter of the wind, and the moist are the matter of the rain; Now saith Elihu,

they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof; that is, look in Pluvia quafi what proportion the Sun draweth the vapours into the Aire, in fluvia, eo q dd that proportion doth the rain fall upon the Earth; or, in the fame Quae fundum proportion that the vapour is drawn up, in that proportion is the pin ram post rain let down.

Some render the word which we translate vapour, a cloud, that Pifc: is, after the water is drawn up into a Cloud, it pours down rain vuporem et nuproportionably. Another translation renders it, Affliction or tron- bens, Significate ble, and give the whole verse thus; He draweth up the drops of eriam columiwater, which poured down rain to their Calamity. This the learned tatom; hins Author applyeth particularly to the Flood in Noahs time; but I verfue its vershall not stay upon that. Our reading is clear; They pour down titur, nam sub-rain according to the vapour thereof; that is, in the same proporti-quarum, que on that vapours come up, the rain falls down.

First, In that, as the rain is made of the vapour, so according viam ad calato the vapour, or in proportion to the vapour, such are the mitatem ejus.

showres of rain; Note;

According to what is naturally received, returns are naturally made.

And if the Clouds of Heaven return to man naturally according to that they receive from the Earth; how is man on earth bound morally, or in duty, to return according to what he receives from Heaven. Let us mind our accordings and proportions to the dealings and dispensations of God. The Clouds of the aire will condemn us, at least witness against us, if we receive much, and return little. I passe this. Only here we may take notice of six things in Concatination one with another: First, vapours are drawn up from the Earth: Secondly, they are made into watery Clouds: Thirdly, from thence they are sent back to moisten the Earth: Fourthly, the rain sent down is proportionable to the vapour that went up: Fifthly, according to that proportion, the Earth is made more or lefte fruitfull; plentifull rains cause or produce plentifull fruits ordinarily from the Earth, and little rains little fruits: Sixthly, and laftly, man is nourished and hath his outward Comforts encreased or lessened in proportion to the fruits which the Earth bringeth forth, or to the fruitfulness of the Earth. All these things attend and depend upon one another. They pour down according to the vapour thereof, and God draws up Eee 2

nebulam ejus.

fundebant plu-

in proportion to what himself purposeth they shall pour down. Thus we see, how God by the Sun draws out the moissure and fap of the Earth, to return it back with advantage. Drawing up the moisture makes the Earth languish, and her fruits wither; sending it down again, makes the Earth green, flourishing and fruitful. They pour down rain, &c. And what more? Elihu aniwers

Verf. 28. Which the Clouds do drop.

מוחק שחקים a tenuissima earum Substantil. Drufe

Here he speaks more expressly, and tells us more clearly than Calum, nunc before, what the vapours are made up into, According to the vapour nubes denotit, thereof, which the Clouds do drop. As Clouds are made of vapours, fo they are the receptacles or vessels of rain, which they hold (as was shewed before) as long as God pleaseth, and when he gives the word, then they drop

And distill upon man abundantly.

That's another elegant word, implying the manner in which the rain comes or falls, it is as by a distillation. Here also 'tis expressed for whose use or sake principally the rain is sent. The Clouds (saith the Text) drop and distill upon man, yet we know men ger themselves out of the rain as soon and as fast as they can. The rain falls upon the earth, and abides there; yet is faid to distil upon man, because the rain distils at mans request, and for mans fake: That other creatures are cherished by the rain, is not for themselves, but for man, as man is not cherished and maintained by those creatures for himself, but for God. As the rain distills chiefly for the glory of God, so nextly for the relief and comfort of man; and for man it distills

Abundantly.

טלי ארם רכ Super hominem multum, vel super homines affluenter, ut II sit sdverbium, guod eò minùs je probat mihi, quia Rab. bic Scribitur eum Cametz. Drus:

There is a double reading of this word. Some take it as an Adjective to the Substancive man, rendring thus, it diffills upon many men; we take it adverbially, Which distill upon man plentifully, that is, in great plenty upon man. We may take in both readings without frain to the Text, or departure from the matter in hand. For as the rain falls or distills upon man abundantly, so upon abundance of men; the rain, we know, falls fometimes very plentifully, and at times, or one time or other all the world over, watering every mans ground, and ferving every mans turn or occasions. ThereTherefore Elihu expresses the blessing fully when he faith, The Clouds distill upon man abundantly, or upon abundance of men.

Hence Note, First; The Lord haib rain enough in store;

He hath vessels pientifully filled for the watering of the Earth; and, The Lord is so free in his dispensation of the rain, that as he gives it to many in number, so to many in kind, he maketh his rain to fall, (as well as his Sun to shine) upon the just, and on the unjust, (Math. 5.45.) It shews the exceeding goodness, as well as the bounty of God, that the evill partake of his benefits as well as

the good.

And, for our further improvement of this bounty of God, remember, that if God be so abundant and liberall in bleffings to us, we ought in proportion to abound in duty towards him, or (as the Apostle exhorts, 1 Cor. 15.58.) we should be fredfast and immoveable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord. Some do only a little, (I may say) only here a stitch and there a stitch of work for God, but we should abound in it; and that not only now and then by fits, but be alwayes fixed in it, especially we should do so, with respect to that, which the rain is a Symbol of, the word of God. When God drops and distills the rain of Gospel truths and holy foul-faving instructions abundantly upon us, how should we abound in every good word and work! It was prophefied of Christ (Pfal. 72.6.) He shall come down as rain upon the mown grafs, as showers that water the earth. Some of the Ancients expound that place of the coming down of Christ in his Incarnation; then indeed he came down like rain upon the mown grass, he came down sweetly and powerfully. 'Tis true also that Christ, who is God, the Word, the substantial Word, comes down as rain in and with the declarative word of God preached and faithfully dispenced to the souls of men: and when Christ comes down thus to us, we should rise up to him, and return fruits o grace, according to the showres of grace, which we have received. The Prophet gives us an elegant comparison of the natural and spiritual rain in their effects and issues, (1sa. 55. 10, 11.) For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give feed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so Shall

shall my word be, that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me voyd, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I fend it. Now what is the pleasure of God in giving his Word ? what is the arrand upon which he sends it ? 'lis I grant, sometimes to harden, deasen and blind a people, (Ifa. 6.9, 10.) 'sis sometimes to be a savour of death unto death, (2 Cor. 2. 16.) These are dreadfull judiciary purposes of God in sending his Word; nor doth it ever please the Lord to fend his Word upon this arrand, but when he is forely difpleased by a peoples slighting and contempt of his Word. The thing which primarily pleaseth him, the purpose which he chiefly pursueth in sending his Word, is, that his people may have (as the Apostle speaks) Their fruit auto holiness in this life, and in the end everlasting life. For these ends, the Lord is daily distilling upon us the rain of his Word, both in commands and promifes, and in both abundantly. Therefore let us labour to abound in returns of faith, of love, of hope, of felf-deniall, of zeal for God, and of fruit-bearing unto God. If when God distills the natural rain, that frould provoke us to fruitfulnels in spiritualls, how much more when he pours down so much spiritual rain upon us! For the close of this medication, consider, That

As the natural rain, First, softens the earth, and molliss it; Secondly, cleanseth the earth, and washeth it; Thirdly, enricheth the earth, and makes it fruitfull; Fourthly, comforts the earth, and makes every thing that moves upon it, and grows out of it, to rejoyce; Fifthly, sometimes drowns the earth, and destroys the Inhabitants of it: As I say, the natural rain doth all these things, so also doth the spiritual rain, the word of God. That, First, mollisheth; Secondly, cleanseth; Thirdly, fructisieth; Fourthly, comforteth the hearts of all those that receive it; and Fisthly, The rain of the word drowns and destroys all those that rise up a-

gainst it, or will not receive it.

1 O B. Chap. 36. Vers. 29, 30, 31.

29. Also, can any understand the spreadings of the Clouds, or the noise of his Tabernacle?

30. Behold, he spreadeth bis light upon it, and co-

vereth the bottom of the sea.

31. For by them he judgeth the people, he giveth meat in abundance.

E Lihu having spoken of the wonderfull work of God in form-ing and sending rain in the two former verses, speaks never ing and sending rain in the two former verses, speaks next of the Clouds, which are as veffels containing the rain, and in which the rain is carried and conveighed up and down the world for the use of man, or for those services, to which God hath appoynted it. He begins with a denying Question:

Vers. 29. Also, can any understand the spreading of the Clouds?

As if he had faid, To what I said before, I adde this, Here is another secret in nature, Can any understand the spreading of the Clouds? He doth not say, can vulgar ignorant and unlearned perfons understand, but can any? Can the wifest? can the most learned? Can the best studied Philosophers understand the spreading of the Clouds? Can they understand? That is, they cannot under-

But have not men, especially learned men, understanding enough to ascend the clouds, and discover the nature of them? Surely their understandings are very mean, or very much clouded, who understand not what the spreading of the clouds mean-

eth.

I answer, though Elihu's question hath a negation in it, yet not a total negation, he doth not exclude the understanding of men wholly our of the clouds; he only denieth man a full understanding of all things which concern either the nature or motion of the clouds. Wife men understand much about the spreading of the clouds, but they cannot understand all. The best of godly men understand not much, or see but a little way into spiritual things: And the wifest of worldly men do not, cannot, see all in natural things.

things. Can any understand

The spreading of the Clouds?

מפר שי עב aliæ steriles fint, alice pluviam, aliæ tant; Sødre-Hirs espansiones vertitur. -Merc:

Here are, First, the Clouds; Secondly, the spreading of them. Empansiones The word which we translate, preading, trains two to vel differentias tion: First, (with the alteration only of a poynt upon one letter) it signifieth The difference of things in any kinde: And then the Text is read, Can any understand the difference of the Clouds, that is, the variety that is among the clouds. The clouds are not all grandinem mit- of a likeness, nor all of a bigness; there are clouds of many forts and fizes: there are clouds which breed fnow, and clouds which breed haile, clouds which breed raine, and clouds which breed thunder and lightning. Some clouds are empty, called clouds without raine or water, (Pro. 25. 14. Jude, v. 12.) and other clouds are full of water: There is a difference also of clouds as to our fight and view, some are black, some white, some red, some are greenish, others palish clouds, from which various colours and appearances, Prognosticks are made of the change of weather, as Christ told the Pharisees (Mat. 16. 2, 3.) Naturalists observe very many differences in the clouds, nor is it without wonder, that the clouds which are made all of one matter (vapours drawn from below) should produce such and so many different effects, that (according to this reading) we have reason to put the que-stion, Who can understand the differences of the Clouds? We read it, and that well and full to the Hebrew Text,

Who can understand the spreadings of the Clouds, or their ex-

The most canning and knowing men in the mysteries of nature, carnot either tell how far the clouds will spread, or to what poynt and part of the world they will convey their water, and (as I may fay) unburden themselves. Thus the words refer back to the two former verses. The Clouds are spread as a Curtain, or as a piece of Tapestry, or as a mighty Canopy; who can understand the spreading of them? The spreading of them; First, as they carry raine; or, Secondly, the spreading of them (as some expound the place) as they convey the Lightening, which the Scripture faith, (Math. 24. 27.) Paffeth from one end of heaven to the other, from the East to the West; who knoweth how far

the Lightning will spread in the Clouds? Thus some connect it with the following verse. Who can understand the spreading

Of the Clouds?

There is a special derivation of the word rendred Clouds, from 20 nubes a the Hebrew, Greek, and Latine, all pretending to the nature of densitate of the Clouds: The Heb ew word properly noteth the thickness of crassamentum grossness of the Clouds; the Greek word noteth the dropping derie nature of the Clouds, being derived from a roote which fignifie held fill fillare, to drop, or (which is near the same) to descend, the roote word vel a 121 fignifying to fall; the Latine word is taken from covering, be-cadere. cause the Clouds mask or cover the face of Heaven, and often hide and screine the shining of the Sun from us.

Now because Elibu is upon a work of nature, and insists upon it all along in the next Chapter; I shall therefore to clear the matter, propose and answer three Questions concerning the

Clouds.

First, What is a Cloud, or what is the nature of the Clouds? A cloud is a moist vapour drawn up from the earth or water by the heat of the Sun into the middle region of the Aire(as Naturalia's divide the Aire) where being by the soldness of the place congealed, and as it were knit together, it hangeth and continueth there, till it, be broken up at the dispose of God, and sent down for the comfort or correction of man in raine, from, haile, &c. The clouds of heaven derive their pedigree from the moisture found on earth, and to the earth they return their moisture.

Secondly, Seeing the Clouds are fuch mighty bodies, and contain (as I may fay) whole feas of water in them, and water, being a heavy body, naturally descends or tends downward (as all heavy things do) it may be questioned (and indeed it is a wonder) how those Clouds are kept alost in the Aire? how comes it to pass that such heavy bodies, such floods of water do not presently fall violently, and at once shed themselves down upon, and over-

whelme the earth? To that I answer,

First, Some say the Clouds are kept up by that natural inbied hear or warmth which is included in them; or that they are kept up by the superiour hear of the Sun, and Stars, which first drew them up.

Secondly, Others fay, these mighty Clouds are held up by Fff

the wind; which keeping them in perpetual motion, they fall not, they descend not, but according to a divine order, by which they are disposed of to several uses.

Thirdly, Others ascribe it to the hollowness or spunginess of their nature, which receiving and taking in the thin aire, they are

more eafily kept up.

Bur when we have fearched to the utmost for reasons in nature, we must rise higher, and resolve the question according to Scripture and divine Philosophy, into the power and will of God. The holding up of the Clouds is Gods work as well as the raising of them up; He gave this law or command unto the Clouds in the day of their creation, that they should not fall down nor distill a drop, but by his own commandement and appoyntment. Thus we find it expressed by Mofes in his description of the creation, (Gen. 1. 6.) Let the firmament (that is, the aire, the inferiour aire next to the middle region) divide the waters from the waters. Here is a divine sanction; there are waters above, and waters below; And faith God, Let the firmament divide the maters from the waters; that is, those waters that are drawn up into Clouds in the aire, a provision for Raine, &c. let them be kept above, and divided from the Sea and waters that dwell below. Thus there was a Law at first to keep quarter, as I may say, between those waters. And Solomon speaking of the eternal Son of God, of his co-eternity with the Father, brings him (under the name of Wildome) speaking thus of himself; I was with him (when he did this and that, and among the rest, Prov. 8. 28.) When he established the Clouds above; that is, when God made a Decree that the Clouds should stay above, and not come down but at his call. So'tis expressed (Fob 26.8.) God binderb up the waters in the thick Cloud, and the Cloud is not rent under them. 'Tis not of it self that the Cloud (having such a weight in it) doth not rent and break, but, faith God, it shall not. (Pro. 30. 4.) He hath bound the waters in a garment. But what is the garment? His own decree and purpose is the garment which bindeth up the waters. For as the waters of the Sea are bounded by the Decree of God (Tob 38. 11.) So likewise the waters in the aire are bound up by his Decree (Pfal. 148. 4, 6.) Praife him ye heaven of beavens, and ye waters which are above the heavens; he hath established them for ever, and bath made a decree which shall not pass.

Zanch: de operibu dei. 1. 2. c. 1.

pass. He harn established the waters which are above the heavens. alwel as the waters below the heavens; he hath established them by a decree (like that of the Medes and Persians) which shall not be disanulled. So then, here's the answer to this second question, How it comes to pass, that the Clouds containing such floods of water (which is an heavy body) do not descend and overwhelm the earth? This is by the power and decree, or by the powerful decree of God, who hath caused such a weak and thin substance, as the Clouds, made up only of Vapours, to hold those mighty waters close, and keep them prisoners, that not a spoonful shall shed forth till himself pleaseth. The Clouds, as some have well expressed it, are like spunges filled with water, and till God layeth his hand upon the Clouds (that is, till he gives a word) and as I may fay, squeezeth or present them by his providence (as we squeez a spung full of water) the waters fall nor. Thus we see the reason, why Elihu makes so great a matter of the spreading of the Clouds, and why the waters fall not prefently together, nor prefently drop out of them, but in their feason.

A third Querie concerning the Clouds may be this; Why are

they placed above? What is their use?

I answer, The use of the Clouds may be considered two ways; first, there is a natural, secondly, a spiritual use of them.

First, there is a natural use of them, and that is twofold.

First, That they may contain water in a readiness to moisten and fatten the earth: Stores and treasures of rain are kept in them

to supply the necessities of all earthly creatures.

Secondly, The natural use of the Clouds is, to attempt the the heat of the air, and to be as a Curtain, or Screen between us and the Sun. If the Sun should alwayes shine fully upon the earth, we were not able to abide it; but the Clouds coming between, do exceedingly qualifie and moderate the heat and fierceness of the Sun. These, besides others, are their natural uses.

And if we look into the Scripture, we shall find many spiritual

and gracious uses, for which God hath made the Clouds.

First, God hath set his Bow in the Clouds, as a token of his savour unto mankind, as a token of his general savour, that he will not drown the world again (Gen. 9.14, 15.) And it shall come to pass, when I bring a Cloud over the Earth, that the Bow shall be Fif 2 feen in the Cloud; and I will remember my Covenant which is between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood, to destroy all flesh. This is alluded to by the Prophet (1/a. 54. 9.) as a token of the special favour of God to his People, that he will never bleak Covenant with them. When Believers see his Bow in the Cloud, they may be as well assured, that they shall be freed from a deluge of wrath, as that the world shall not be overwhelmed again with a deluge of waters.

Secondly, We find the Lord making use of a Cloud, or using the ministery of a Cloud, in a gracious way, for the conducting of his People out of Egypt quite through the Wilderneis unto Canaan. That I grant was more than an ordinary Cloud, and lower and nearer the earth than usually Clouds are, yet it was doubtless of the same nature with other Clouds (Exod. 13.21. Neh. 9. 19.) And therefore, when the Prophet would assure the Church of guidance and protection, he tells them (1fa. 3. 5.) The Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Sion, and upon her afsemblies, a Cloud and Smoak by day, and the shining of the staming Fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence. And we at this day, may make this spiritual use (according to Scripture) of the Clouds, which we behold, as to mind us how the Lord both protected and guided the People of Ifrael through the wilderness, so to assure us that he will protect and guide us through the World. Christ is this Cloud, a covering poteeting Cloud unto his Church; and we may fiveetly meditate upon him, not only when we behold the Sun, but as often as we behold the clouds.

Further, As Christ serves his Church like a Cloud, so the Clouds have done and shall do many services to Christ. A beight Cloud overshadowed Christ in his transfiguration (Mat. 17.5.) A Cloud received him out of the Apostles fight at his ascension (Ast. 1.9.) and he shall come again in the Clouds to judgment Mat. 24.30. Luke 21.27.) He is also represented) sitting upon

a white Cloud (Rev. 14. 14.

Thirdly, The spi it of God gives us another gracious use of, and meditation upon the Clouds; that as often as we see thick and black Clouds, which threaten a grievous storm, scattered, and the air cleared, this should put us in mind of the abundant grace

of God pardoning our fin (Isa. 44.22.) I have blotted, as a thick Cloud, thy transgreffion, and as a Cloud thy fins. False and faithless Ministers are called Clouds without water (Fude v. 12.) And the faithful Ministers of the Gospel, fice as a Cloud to water Souls, as the converted Gentiles are said, to flee as doves to the windows (1/a. 60. 8.) There are not only natural but spiritual uses and improvements to be made of the Clouds, as often as we behold them; and the Scripture in many places, leads and points us to fuch meditations. It is faid of Luther, that once beholding a great Cloud, that promised, or had a great appearance of rain, in a time of drought, blown away and dispelled, without yeelding one drop of rain to refresh the earth; he turned to some of his friends, and faid, Such are the Promises of the world. Men, faid he, make Tales funt progreat and fair promises, pretending much good, and good-will to these to whom they are made, which yet vanish and come to nothing; and concluding his observation upon the deceirful appearance of the Cloud, added the words of Solomon (Prov. 25. 14.) Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift, is like clouds without rain. Such especially are all falle teachers, they, if any, boast themselves of a false gift, that is, they either pretend to a gift which they have not, or they pretend their gift is of Christ, when it is not; these are like Clouds withour rain, or (as the text in the Epille of Jude, even now mentioned) calls them, they are Clouds without water, carried about of winds, that is, which way so ever the wind of outward respects and advantages bloweth, they are carried.

So much for answer to those three questions about the Clouds.

Who can understand the spreading of the Clouds?

Hence note; First, Even natural things exceed the reach of mans understanding.

How much more do spiritual things, the mysteries of Grace Nichodemus was a knowing man, a Master in Ifrael, yet how simply did he speak when Christ proposed to him, and presented him with the necessity of a new-birth! Nor hath a natural man a clearer inlight in any other Gospel mystery (1 Cor. 2. 14.) The natural man receiveth not the things of God, neither can be know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth (or differneth) all things; that is, he hath a principle of

milliones mundi.

spiritual understanding, whereby he is able to make a right judgment of all things necessary to his own edification and salvation.

Again;
If the natural things which God hath made (the spreading of the Clouds) exceed our understanding, then how much more doth God himself who made them!

Who can understand the spreadings of God? the immensity of God? the eternity, the omnipotency, the infinity of God? That's the thing Eliha chiefly aimes at in all this discourse. While he poseth fob, and all men, in the natural works of God, he would convince fob, and all men, that neither he was, nor any man is able to comprehend the equity and righteousness of his proceeding in the darker wayes of Providence. And this he did, because fob had too often (upon the matter) called God to answer, asking why it was so? instead of a silent submission to what he did

nor understand, nor could see the reason of.

Further, consider this particular in nature, The spreading of the Clouds. We see the Clouds every day, and we see their spreadings, that's common and obvious to the eye; yet (saith Elibu) who can understand these spreadings? There is a greater latitude in the Clouds than we imagine; and if we cannot sully understand the things which we see, how can we understand what we see not? Who apprehends the true greatness of the Clouds, the greatness of the Moon, the greatness of the Stars, the greatness of the Sun; all which our eyes behold? We can neither understand by our eye, nor by the rules and reports of the greatest Astronomers, the true magnitude or greatness of those heavenly visible bodies; who then can take the true dimension (if I may so speak) of things invisible? Who can understand the spreading of the Clouds?

Or the noise (or noises) of his Tabernacle.

The word notes a dreadful noise, a noise with a tumult, such a a TRU somuit, noise as is made when ruine and desolation cometh upon a place, perfirepait, describes fuch a noise as the Prophet describeth in a time of war. Moab notat sonitum belici shall die with a tumult (AMOS 2. 2.) Who can understand the Rab. Shelo. noise of his tabernacle?

This noise may be expounded two wayes;

First, Of thunder-claps. When Clouds are discharged, their thunder-bolts, like cannon bullets, rattle through the air: Who can understand this noise of his tabernacle? As no man can at all understand the thunder of his power (Chap. 26.14.) so not the All of his powerful thunder. This is a truth, and the text may well take in that noise, the noise of the thunder. But because Eliha speakes professedly and expressly of thunder in the next Chapter (vers. 4.) therefore (I conceive) the noise of his tabernacle, here may be some-what else, or less than that of thunder, that is, the noise of the winds, breaking our from the tabernacle of God. What a buffeling noise, what an out-cry (as I may say) the winds make we all know, especially when they become stormes, and are not only winds but tempests. There are sweet gentle gales of wind, which make but a little murmur, or whisper in the air, we can scarce hear their voice; but some winds roar, fome winds come little short of thunder, for noise and lowdness, and I suppose Elihu chiefly intends this noise, by The noise

Of his tabernacle.

But what is the tabernacle of God? I answer; That word Tabernacle is often used in the Old Testament; properly it signifieth a tent in war, a military mansion, a flitting habitation, or portable house, having no fixed or settled seat. The tabernacle under the Law was the place appointed by God for publick wor- Tabernaculuthip. We read also of the Feaft of Tabernacles (Lev. 23. 34.) his 1700 diat which solemn Feast, the Jews dwelt seven dayes in tents, to sum Succosh put them in remembrance, that God made their fore-fathers i. e. Tabernadwell in tents when he brought them out of Egypt, as also to culorum. mind them, that here they had no abiding place, but were to feek one to come. And as this place of publick worship, so any place for private dwelling was called a tabernacle. Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, until &c. (Said David, Ps. 132. 3.) that is, into my house, which though it be a royal Pallace, yet I look upon it, but as a movable tabernacle. But doth God dwell in a movable house? God is immovable, he makes no removes, yet wherefoever God is pleased to shew himself in his power and marvelous works, there we may fay his tabe macle is. The tabernacle of God, where this noise, this mighty noise is made, is nothing else but the Clouds before spoken of. The Clouds

Clouds are Gods tabernacle; they are called so expresly by a word of very near cognition unto this (Pfal. 18. 11.) He maketh the Clouds his pavilion. A pavilion is an extraordinary tabernucle; a pavilion is, that tabernacle which is proper to a King or to the General of an Army. Now faith the Plalmift, He maketh the Clouds his pavilion; In them he shews his power and glory. They are also called the chariots of God (Ffal. 104. 3. Dent. 32. 6.) and he is said to come in the Clouds, as a Prince in his chariot. He came in a thick Cloud (Exod. 19.9.) and he descended in a Cloud (Exod. 34.5.) which here is called his tabernacle. So then, the Clouds, together with all that middle region of the air, where the rain now, and fiery meteors, are generated, are in Scripture allegorically called, the tabernacle of God; because there he seems often to dwell or reside, for the producing of many wonderful works upon this inferiour world. We may take the word here in a double allusion unto a tabernacle, or unto two forts of tabernacles.

First, There were ordinary tabernacles, wherein men dwelt. The ancient Hebrews dwelt intents or tabernacles; these were tabernacles for civil use, or for habitation; in allusion unto which, the Apostle speakes of the body, wherein the soul dwels (2 Cor. 5.) When the earthly house of this tabernacle skall be dissolved, we know, that we have a building of God, an house not made with

hands, eternal in the heavens.

Secondly, There were tabernacles for military use, souldiers tents, or tabernacles. As the whole heavens, fo the clouds especially may be called the tabernacle of God in both respects; they a e his house, wherein he sits unseen, and doth wonders all the wold over; in them he sheweth his power, and appears glo ioully, and as a great Prince or mighty General he fends out his edicts and orders from the clouds, he commands winds, stormes, tempests, snow & baile for several dispensations to go from thence, according as his cwn infinite wisdom seeth fit, and the cases of men require, whether in wayes of Judgment or of mercy; as Elihis tells us, yet more diffinctly, at the 31th verse, For by them (saith he) judgeth be the people, he giveth meat in abundance. The clouds are very fit and commodious for Gods use in any of these respects; either for the terrifying and punishing of the wicked, or, for the helping and feeding of them that fear him. Now foralmuch

assumed as the clouds are called the tabernacle of God upon these accounts,

Learn first; There God is said to be especially, where he especially workes.

God is no more in one place of the world than in another, as to his being and existence; for he is every where, he filleth heaven and earth. We must not think that God is shut up in the clouds as a man in his tabernacle; but because God workes much in the clouds, and doth great things by the rain, thunder and lightening, therefore the cloudes, whence these Mercors issue, are called his tabernacle. Where-ever God works much, he is said to dwell. Why is God said to dwell with them that are of an humble and contrite heart? even because he workes much in them, and much by them. So because many great works of God are done in the Clouds, as we shall see more particularly hereafter, therefore the Lord is said to dwell there as in his tabernacle.

Secondly, When 'cissaid, Who can understand the noise of his

tabernacle?

Observe;

The most dreadful storms and tempests, the roaring winds which we hear at any time, are sent out by God, they are the noise of his tabernacle;

They go when he saith go, (Pfal. 148. 8.) Stormy winds and tempests fulfilling his will. We may think, stormes, of all things, least under command and order, yet they are under an exact order. The most stormy winds go not an haires breadth besides, or beyond the commission which God gives them. As often as we hear the roaring noise of the wind, much more, of thunder, let us remember, its the noise of his tabernacle.

Vers. 30. Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it, and covereth the bottom of the sea.

Eliha infilts still upon the workes of God, He spreadeth his light. Some understand by this light, the lightening; and it is a great truth, God wonderfully ipreads the lightening upon the dark clouds, as if they were all in a stame, That's clear to the eye when it lighteneth; and God is styd (Pfal. 144. 6.) To cast

forth his lightening; which comes neer this word in the text, he spreadeth it. But because in the next chapter Elihu speakes purposely of the lightening, therefore I shall not stay upon that sence

here, but decline it.

Rather take light in the common notion; He spreadeth his light, that is, the light of the Sun, which is eminently called Gods Light, upon it, that is, upon the cloud spoken of in the former verse, and so the two parts of this verse, yeild us a description (as I conceive) of the weather-changes made by God. When we have had much rain and stormes, God can prefently spread his light upon the cloud, that is, cause the light and heat of the Sun to conquer the clouds and scatter them.

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Radices maris ikim partes.

And (he also) covereth the bottom of the Sea. That is, by and by, he makes it very dark by the gathering of thick clouds, even as dark as the bortom of the Sea, whither the light cannot come, or dark to the bottom of the Sea. The original is, the rosts of the fine infineq; Sea, that is, the lowest parts of the Sea, which we fignificantly translate, the bottom of the Sea. Some explicate the whole verse, He spreads his light upon the face of the whole heavens, and spreads the waters over the Ocean, so that no bottom can be seen, scarcely found. Mr. Broughton, by the roots of the Sea, understands the earth. Another faith, he makes mention of the roots of the Sea, because the waters of the Sea, are as it were the roots of the Clouds, they chiefly supplying the matter of which they are made. Vapours drawn from the waters of the Sea, by the heat of the Sun, become Clouds, and these Clouds cover both Earth and Sea, far and near. Thus 'tis matter of wonder to see such great and sudden changes in the air; that the same Sun with its beames should exhale those vapours which are condensed into Clouds, and that foon after, those Sun-beams should scatter and dissolve those Clouds; or that now the heavens should be so masked with Clouds as to make all dark, and in a little space, all return to its former brightness and beauty.

He spreadeth his Light. What is there in the world that is not

Gods? Here he calleth Light his.

Hence note; God loves to entitle himself to Light in an especial manner. (Mat. 5. 44.) He canfeth bis San to Shine, &c. The Moon is his as well as the Sun, and the Stars are his as much as either; but because the Sun is the greater Vessel and conveigher of Light, therefore saith Christ, He canseth his Sun to shine on the evil and the good, &c. God himself is Light, and the Father of Lights (Jam. 1. 17.) which is true not only of spiritual Light, by which the things of God are discovered to us; but also of natural Light, the light of the Sun, that 's Gods Light too, he is the Father of it.

Secondly note; The changes which we see in the air, from fair to sowl weather, from calms to tempests, are from God.

It is not in the creature to make one day or hour fair or foul. As Christ gives the reason why no man should swear by his head, because he cannot make an hair white or black, he cannot change the colour of an hair, nor make a hair of any colour: So, it is not in the power of any man, to make one day fair or foul, that's Gods peculiar; He spreadeth his Light upon the Clouds, and coveresh the bottom of the Sea.

Vers. 31. For by them he judgeth the People, he giveth meat in abundance.

This 31th Verse gives us the effect of all that which Eliha had spoken before, of the rain, of storms and tempests, and we may add, of lightening, and of thunder; By them he judgeth the people and giveth meat in abundance. Here are two effects; First, an effect grievous; Secondly, an effect gracious: The former proceeds from the justice, the latter from the mercy and goodness of God.

By them, that is, by the rain, by the winds, &c. he judgeth the people.

To judge is taken three wayes in Scripture.

First, To judge, is to rule or govern. When it is said, such a man judged Israel, the meaning is, he ruled and governed Israel: That's the language of the book of Judges every where, when their Governous are spoken of.

Secondly, To Judge, is to determine, or give sentence in a spe-

cial case (Deut. 25. 1.)

Thirdly, To judge is to punish or afflict, and thus often in Scrip-G g g 2 ture, ture, when God punisherh any person or people, he is said to judge them (Pfal. 51.4.) That thou mayest be cleared when thou judgest, that is, when thou afflictest, or layest thine hand upon me (faith David) as God had threatened by Nathan, that the sword should not depart from his house; this moved David to make confession, Against thee, thee only, have I sinned: - that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and cleared when thou judgest. As if he had faid, my confession, O Lord, will be thy justification; all may see I have given thee abundant cause to lay thy chastening hand upon me (Heb. 13. 4.) Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge; though men let them pass, yet God will not, he will punish them. Again, in that notable place (1 Cor. 11. 31, 32.) If we would judge our selves we should not be judged of the Lord. What it is to be judged, the Apostle sheweth in the next words; But when we are judged, we are chaftened of the Lord. The Apostle wains the Church to take heed how they came to the solemn assemblies, lest coming rashly and unpreparedly, the hand of God should fall heavy upon them, by weakness, sickness and death. When Elihu saich, By them he judgeth the People. We are to take judging in this third sence; He judgeth, that is, he afflicteth and punisheth men by these things. Thus the Allusion is elegantly followed. The Lord from his tabernacle, or throne in the Clouds, sends forth Edicts, and signes his Warrants, for the punishment both of nations and persons; windy stormes, rain and thunder, going forth as executioners of his orders and appointments: By them he judgeth the people.

> Hence observe; First, God can make a scourge of any of the creatures.

By them, that is, by the rain and by the wind, he judgeth the people. He can use what instrument he pleaseth to afflict and chaften us with. Read the holy Scriptures, read the Histories of the Church, and you will find all forts of creatures summoned one time or other, and sent forth as Gods messengers, to punish the pride and stubbornness, the impenitency and perversness of mens hearts and wayes. How many creatures did God make use of to punish Pharaoh with, and many of them very contemptible ones; among the rest, the hail, rain, and thunder spoken of in this place, were his instruments of vengeance in plaguing that hardness

ned King. Whensoever God afflicts a people by the creatures, he judgeth them by the creatures. Let us take heed, that we provoke not God to turn those things which were given for our good, to our hurt; that he make not what was made our fervant, our punishment. God made all creatures serviceable and useful to man, but through fin they become grievous and destructive to man; By them he judgeth the people.

He giveth meat in abundance.

Here is the second effect wrought or produced by these crea- copiosum. tures: He giveth, that is, God giveth, meat, that is, all kind of food and provision, for the life both of man and beast; and he give thit in abundance: He doth not give it scantly or nigardly, in small portions and pittances, but in full measure, pressed down, heaped Dat esam mulup, and running over. By them, that is, by the rain and by the tis mortalibm. wind, &c. Godgives us our meat in abundance. One translation Hieron. faith, He givethmeat to many, that is, to all.

Escam ad copium. Heb. i. c.

Hence note; First, Our daily food is the gift of God.

He giveth meat. No man gets his own bread unless God giveth it : God must give it before we can get it.

> Secondly note; God is a free, bountiful and liberal house-keeper;

He giveth meat in abundance; he giveth to very many, yea, to all, and he giveth very much; he giveth meat to all the foivles of the Air, and to all the fishes of the Sea, to all men and beasts living on the earth, they all receive food from God: he giveth food to all flesh (Pfal. 136.25.) He filleth every living thing. (Pfil. 147.9.) He giveth to the beast his food, and feedeth the young ravens when they cry. Christ makes this an argument of faith in God for food and cloathing (Mat. 6. 26.) Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them: are not ye much better than they? How little faith have you, who knowing that God feeds the fowls of the air, yet cannot trust him for your food! He giveth food in abundance. 8 230000 00000 18 18 18 18 18 18 18 the whole learn, what cause we have to acknowled

Thirdly,

Thirdly note; Plenty and searcity are at the dispose of God;

He can give meat in scarcity, as well as meat in abundance; he can give cleanness of teeth as well as sulness of bread: And as he can strengthen the staff of bread, so break it, and canse us to eat bread by weight and with care, and to drink water by measure and with assonishment (Ezek. 4. 16.) To eat by weight and drink by measure, is to eat and drink in the want of bread and water, as is expressed (vers. 17.) And as these changes of our natural, so of our spiritual food are from the Lord (Amos 8. 11.) I will send a samine (What samine?) not of bread, but of hearing the word of the Lord. 'Tis the Lord who lends plenty and scarcity of bread, whether for the soul or for the body.

Fourthly, In that he faith, by them he giveth meat in abun-

dance,

Note;
God useth natural meanes as the cause either of plenty or scarcity.

The Lord could give us abundance, if he pleafed, without rain, but he rarely gives abundance but by rain; he sends rain out of the Clouds to water the earth, and make it fruitful. The Lord could make our fouls fruitful in every good work, without the preaching of the word, but he seldom doth it (I believe never when the word may be had) without the preaching of the word. And therefore the Lord by his Propher makes a comparison between, or a paralel of these two (1/a. 55. 10, 11.) As the rais cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give feed to the fower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be, that gowh out of my mouth, &c. The Lord useth rain and snow, yea, wind and thunder, to fit the earth, as he userh his Word and holy Ordinances to fit the foul, to bring forth fruit to himself. He could do both alone, but he improve the that order of nature and grace which himself at first set up and instituted to bring about these excellent ends. By them be giveth meat in abundance.

The Greek translation renders all manner of muchness. From the whole learn, what cause we have to acknowledge the good-

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Prabebit efcim
per multam.
Sept.

nels of God in every shower of rain, and fleet of snow; for by

them he giveth us our mear.

We should hence also be minded to fear the Lord, and to take heed of his displeasure. It is said (Asts 12.20.) when Hered was highly displeased with them of Tire and Sidon, they came with one accord to him; and having made Blassus the Kings Chamberlain their friend, desired peace, because their Country was nourished by the Kings Country. O how much more should we labour to avoid the displeasure of God, and hasten to make our peace with him, seeing our Country is nourished by his Country! The heavens nourish the earth, else the earth could not afford any thing for our nourishment. We are sed rather from the heavens than from the earth. The clouds drop down and make the earth far, to give grass for cattel and corn for man. Elihu speaks nothing of the Earth, but of the Clouds, from them we are fed.

Laftly confider, Elihu joynes both effects expresly, By them he

judgeth the people, he giveth meat, &c.

Hence note;
The Lord can make the same creature either beneficial or hurtful to m.

That which is an instrument in his hand for good to his servants, is often a plague and a scourge to his enemies. The rain which at one time moistens the earth, at another time drowns it; the rain which at one time cherisheth the creatures, at another time choaks them. The winds which at one time fan the air and cool it, at another time enrage and vex it; the winds which at one time sweeten and cleanse the air, at another time corrupt and infect it. The Lord can with the same creatures, surnish himself for any dispensation: By them he judgeth the people, and by them he gives h meat in abundance.

J O B, Chap. 36. Vers. 32, 33.

32. With clouds be covereth the light, and commandeth it not to fine, by the cloud that cometh between.

33. The noise whereof sheweth concerning it, the cattel also concerning the vapour.

Hujus et sequentis versus difficultas et lius in toto hos Reader. libro, ne dicum tur. Bold:

Hefe two verses have a Character of difficulty and obscurity put upon them by several interpreters; and some have concluded them the most difficult and darkest portion of the whole obscuritas tan- Book of Job, yea, of the whole Book of God. And should I reckon ta semper ab up all the various Grammatical constructions of these words, omnibus enar- together with the distinct interpretations given upon them, I ratoribus habi- should weary my self, and rather perplex than advantage the

And therefore I shall speak to these two verses, First, as they in toto facro co- are laid down plainly in our translation, according to which (with dice locus isto submission to the judgement of those learned Authors) I see neiimpenetrabili-or esse videa- ther any great difficulty nor obscurity in them, and shall afterwards give a brief account at least, of some of those different readings and translations which I find upon them.

The words (as I conceive) according to the mind of our tranflators, and as the Text clearly beareth, hold out two things concerning the raine, of which Elihu had spoken before.

First, What is naturally preparatory to raine or foule weather, that we have in the 32d verse, With clouds be covereth the light, and commandeth it not to shine by the Cloud that cometh be-

Secondly, We have that which is declaratory of raine, or (as some call them) the Prognosticks and signs of raine; these are laid down in the 33d verse, The noise thereof shemeth concerning it, the Castel also conserning the vapour.

Vers. 32. With clouds he covereth the light.

He, that is, God covereth the light with Clouds. We heard of the Clouds at the 29th verse, but the word there used is not that that which is used in this 32d verse. The word here made use of Vox 193 by Elihu, fignifies generally any thing that is hollow or concave, as amigua eft, ad a spoon, platter, or bool, or such like utensils, which are bowed manue on nuwith a convex and concave superficies; it hath also particularly two volas denotate eminent fignifications, both of which are made use of in this place ad nubes refero by Interpreters. First, it fignifieth the band; so we transfare it guid de iis haby Interpreters. First, it insulfere the pana; it we trainlate to stensor assum, (Job 16. 17.) There is no injustice in my hand. The word stensor assum, which here we translate a Cloud, is there translated, a hand: enquisings Now, the hand, we know, bath a hollowness or cavity in it, un-nificat, quales less when it is purposely held forth plaine. The second significa- in unaquag; tion is that of the Text, a Cloud, which is also hollow, and (as most nubs due funt, conclude) the same word is put to signific a hand, and a Cloud, concerns to because Cloud, while as the first appearance are but forell as like concerns. because Clouds usually at the first appearance are bet small, or like Dieu, in loc. a hand, as Elijahs servant reported to him, after his seventh going to view the Heavens (I Kings 18. 44.) Behold, a little Cloud like a mans hand. In this sence we take it here in our translation: Some render With his hand he covereth the light, we say, With Clouds

He covereth the light.

He covereth or hideth the light, that is, from our eyes, he cauf- Texit; eth it to disappear, or not to appear to us: The word notes co- abscordi, imvering as with a garment, or covering with anything that inter- ponendo alicepts and flops the fight; and hence by a Trope it is applyed to quid quo tegas the pardon of fin (Psal. 32. 1.) Blessed is the man whose fin is culo vel veste, covered. When the Lord pardons fin, he is faid to cover it, because he will not suffer it to appear against the sinner, nor be charged upon him to condemnation. As pardon covers fins, fo Clouds cover the Heavens, and when they are covered the light is covered. With Clouds he covereth the light. The Prophet Feremy in his Lamentations (Chap. 3.44.) complained fadly, because God (who is light) had covered himself, Thou hast covered thy self with a Cloud, that our prayers should not pass through. As God doth sometimes cover himself, or hide the light of his Countenance from his people, as with a cloud, that their prayers cannot pass through; so he often hides or covers the light of the aire with natural o-proper Clouds, that the Sun-beams for a time cannot pierce nor pass through; With Clouds he covereth

The

The light.

TAX tum lu. quia est fons lucis, significat.

The word used by Elihu, fignifies both light and the Sun, which com, tum folem, is the fountain, from whence light flows and issues; yea, the word a quo lun, vel fignifies also fire. The Sun, Moon, and Stars, are called (ignes) the fires of heaven, because like so many fires or mighty torches they give light to us on earth. And by a metaphor the word fignifies foy, Comfort, all forts of good things; as on the other fide. by darkness, troubles and calamities of all forts are metaphorically exprest in Scripture. With Clouds be covereth the light,

> And commandeth it not to shine by the Cloud that cometh between.

As if he had faid, When a Cloud covereth the light, 'is the command of God which puts the Cloud as a covering upon it. Those words [not to shine] are not expresly in the Hebrew Text; there it is only thus; With Clouds he covereth the light, and commandeth it by that which cometh between: nor is the weed Cloud exprest in the latter part of the verse, we put it in as a suppliment in another Character, more fully to express the sence of the

And commandeth it not to hine.

Verbum TMS quod significat præcipere, quum regit 79 fignificat anterdicere. Pifc:

The word which we translate to command, properly fignifies, to bid or command a thing to be done; but when it stands in con-Aruction, as here, with Gnal, it fignifieth to forbid or stay a thing that it be not done. (Gen. 2.16.) God commanded the man, or Prapositionem concerning the man, &c. As that command expressed a liberty to eat of every other tree in the Garden, fo it included a prohibition of eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge, which is also expressed at the 17th verse. We have a like construction of the word (Gen. 28.6. 1 Kings 2. 43.) He commandeth it not to Chine

By the Cloud that cometh between.

WID occurrit irruit aggres-Suselt, er Meappearant inrance let oc-

By that which cometh between, or by that which meets it, that is, as we supply it, by the thick and dark Cloud which meets and intercepts the bright beames of the Sun. The root of the word fignifies to meet with force (not only occurrere but irruere) Chap. 36.

to rush upon, to invade, to assault, or to charge, as an enemy is currit deprecharged in battel; and it fignifies, by a Metaphor, to intercede, Hinc UNDER to make prayer or supplication for another, which is as it were a per eccurrent, coming between man and man. An Interceffor cometh between fc: per ocurtwo parties, the party offending, and the party offended, he in remembrane, terposeth himself to make up the breach, or to take up the diffe- qua interventrence, that if possible a reconciliation may be made. The Latine In regit, Drust word which we translate Latinely to intercede, is of the fame fig- merci nificancy; and this Hebrew word is often fo rendred (Jer. 7. 16.) Pray not for this people, nor make intercession to me; that is, thou shalt not come between me and this people to stop or stay me, that I break not out into wrath, or from pouring out my wrath upon them. In other Scriptures it is used to note an act of intercession between man and man (Gen. 33.8.) as also an act of address by prayer and intreaty, whether towards God or man, (Job 21. 15. Ruth 1. 16.) And because the word properly notes meeting another with a kind of violence, it intimares with what a holy violence, with what strength, earnestness, and fervency of spirit, we ought to meet God, either in prayer for our selves, or when we come as intercessors, and stand before him in the behalf of others, whether Persons, Nations, or Churches.

Many Interpreters (as I shall shew afterward) take the word in this sence here for an Intercessor, or for a person that prayeth and intercedeth for another. We, in our translation, expound it of a thing, and that thing of a Cloud that interpofeth or cometh. between us and the Light. He commandeth the light not to shine, by the Cloud that cometh between, or, by the Cloud that paffeth be-

tween m and the light of the Sun.

Hence note; First, The best and sweetest mercies we have in this world, may quickly meet with a stop.

When we have the Light, a Cloud may foon come between the Light and us: Which as it is true of the natural Light and Clouds, so of that which is Light in a figure, our most comfortable enjoyments; and that which is a Cloud in a figure, troublesome and afflictive Providences. There is no light, of what kind soever it is, but there may be a Cloud to intercept it, and come between us and that; even the light of the favour of God, the light of Hhh 2 his

his countenance, which is the most blessed light of all, even that light hath many a Cloud. The clouds of our sins cause the Lord to cloud his face with anger and displeasure, and hinder the light of his favour and loving-kindness from shining upon our souls.

Secondly, In that Elihu faith, He commandeth it not to shine,

Note; The Lord hath a soveraign power over all creatures;

He fends forth his commanding word, not only to Angels and Men, but to Beafts, yea, to inanimates, he fends out his orders and edicts to the Clouds of the Air, to the Light of the Sun, to things without life, and they submit presently and obey; he speaketh to the light as if it were a reasonable creature, he commandeth it not to shine, and it shineth not. The hosts of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth are at the dispose of God; the whole course of nature moves and stands still at his word and pleasure. The Sun stood still in the dayes of Joshua at his command; and by the same command, the Sun went backward in the days of Hezekiah; and 'cis by his command that the Sun withdraws its light, and is mussed up with Clouds at any time. He commandeth it not to shine.

Take these Inferences from ir.

Pirst, Then, what cannot God do? He that commands the light not to shine, and it shineth not; Is any thing too hard for him? who but God can stop the Sun from shining? If all the Princes and Potentates of this world should joyn their forces, their counsels together, and send a prohibition to the Sun, to stay its light, and sorbear its shining one moment, they were not able to do it; yet if the Lord do but speak the word, the Sun shineth not; he can give it a prohibition, and supersede the going forth of its light to us: yes, he hath power enough, not only to cover the Sun with Clouds, but to turn it into a Cloud, and to blot it out of the heavens.

Secondly, learn hence, In what dependance we are upon God for every thing. God can keep the light from us every day if he pleafeth, and wrap us up in perpetual darkness, as he plagued the Land of Egypt with thick darkness for three dayes together. Tis erue, the Sun riseth and goeth down in a natural course, yer still

by a divine order and commission. As God can forbid the Light by interposing Clouds, so he can forbid the Clouds to give us showers, and bind up all the sweet influences of heaven from defilling upon the earth to make it fruitful. He can speak to our garments that they warm us not, to our food that it nourish us not, to our physick that it cure and heal us not, to all our relations that they comfort us not, to all our possessions and riches that they content us not. O let us remember that we depend upon God for Rain, for Light, for Sun-shine, for all; it is at his word that they all put themselves forth to do us good, and at his word they are all staid and stopt in their motion, from doing or bringing us

any good. Let us remember also God can command another light not to shine; he can by a word stop the progress of the Word, and stay that blessed and most beautiful light, the light of the Gospel, from thining to us, by tome Cloud or other coming between. To how many nations of people, where that light fometimes shined, hath God long fince fent a command, and it shineth not! It. shined brightly in former Ages upon the African Churches, but now, for a long time, God hath said to the light of the Gospel, shine not upon them; there's scarce any light at all, at most but a glimmering of Gospel-Light in all that vast continent, a quarterpart of the world. What mighty Dominions are now possess by the followers of Mahomet, both in Europe and Alia, where the light of the Gospel did once shine very brightly and gloriously! How famous were those seven Asian Churches, men ioned and writ to by the command of Christ, and the ministry of his servant and Secretary John (Rev. 1. 2, 3.) yet now darkness possesfeth all those places, and the Alcoran hath thrust out the Gospel; and whence is all this? Surely God commanded, and that light shined nor, nor hath it shined with any brightness for many hundred years. Jesus Christ, who threatened Ephesas with the removal of her Candlestick, hath removed all those Candlesticks, and put out their lights. The same stop can God give to the Gospel-light which hath thined among us (bleffed be his Name) for many years together: Let us take heed that we forfeit not that blefsed light, that we provoke not the Lord by our abuse of it and unthankfulness for it, to send out a command, that it shine not among us any more. We read in the Prophets how divine light

was prohibited both to the People and to the Prophets: The stop of it to the People, we have (Amos 8.9.) I will cause the Sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day. The Prophet speaks not here at all of the stop of natural light, nor doth he only intend the stop of that metaphorical light, Prosperity in outward things, which the Lord doth often eclipse and darken, when men dream least of it, or have no more fear about it, than they have that the Sun will go down at noon day; but he, at leaft, intends, if it be not his principal intendment, to shew that a grievous judgment was hastning upon them, as to their spiritual enjoyments; that the light of divine knowledge, what to believe, and what to practife, was declining, and ready to go down, though they thought it was but noon with them, and the day very clear. For as the famine threatned (verf. 11.) is expounded upon the place, by the Prophet himself, not to be a famine of bread, and a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord; so the darknels threatened in this 9th verse, is not to be restrained to the loss of their worldly liberties and comforts, but extended to those which were spiritual and divine, the failing of vision, and the removing of the light of the Word. And as in this Prophet we find the light departing from the People, so in the third of Micah (verf. 6, 7.) we find God commanding the light not to shine to the Prophets (the false prophets he meanesthere, for so he describeth them, vers. 5.) Therefore shall night be unto you (the prophets who deceive my people, who teach them vanity, and lead them to Idolatry and superstition; therefore, I say, shall night be unto you) that ye shall have no vision, and it shall be dark to you that you shall not divine and the Sun shall go down over the Prophets, and the day shall be dark over them. What the Lord means by all this, you have exprest in the close of the 7th verse, There is no answer of God, that is, God doth not now any more manifest his mind and will by the Prophets, that they might manifest his will unto the People. I close this point with the renewal of my former admonition; Let us therefore take heed we provoke not the Lord to command this light not to shine, either to Prophets or People, in our Horizon.

Thirdly, He commandeth it not to shine by the Cloud that cometh between. Though (as I faid) the word Cloud, be not exprest in the text, yet we know 'tis a Cloud that usually cometh between' Hence

the light and us.

Hence note;

Though God can do all things by his bare mord, yet he ordinavily aleth means to bring about his purpoles, whether for good or evil, whether in mercy or in judgement, to the children of men.

There is something comes between. God hath a Cloud, or fomewhat like it, to put between us and the light. The Apostle verf. 6. (2 Thef. 2. 6, 7.) treating of Antichrift, the man of fin, incimates, that he would have filled the world with the darkness of errour and superstition very quickly, by a full discovery of himfelf, had not something with-held him, had not something come between him and his design for a time. What was that? 'Tis generally conceived, that which did with-hold or come between organization, v.7 the man of fin, and his purpose of filling the world with the darkness of his wicked errours and abominable worship, was the power of the Roman Empire at that time; Antichrist could not put forth his power while that power stood in its strength. God could have with-held Antichrist immediately from putting forth of himfelf, but he saw it best to put a block in his way, the power of the Roman Empire, and until that was thrust out of the way, the man of fin could never shew himself fully, in that unlimited exercise of his finful power. Now, I say, as there was then a with-holder of Antichristian darkness, somewhat that came between and hindred its effectual working; to usually, I may fay universally, somewhat comes between to check and stop the course of the Golpellight, or of any other mercy. Sin is a Cloud of our making and God in judgement makes that as a Cloud coming between us and our mercies. He did so of old to Israel, and he told them so by his Prophet (Fer. 5. 25.) Your fins have with-holden good things from you. Sin with-holds good things, not formally, but meretorionfly, that is, fin is the meriting or deferving cause of their withholding. This one Cloud of our fins, brings all the Clouds of trouble between us and our mercies; and the Lord hath alwayes some Cloud or other of trouble at hand, in readiness to cover the light, that it shine not to us, when we trouble and grieve him by those foggy and filthy clouds of our fins. Thus far of that which is preparatory to rain, Chuds covering the light. It followeth,

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Hic versus difficillinus eft si qui in toto Jobo, in quo quot Sunt expessiores tot fere sensus afferuntur. Merc.

Strepit us ejus quidam deducunt a VI7 vit, vocifera-tus eft, alii a

Vers. 33. The noise thereof sheweth concerning it, the cattel also concerning the vapour.

This Verse, according to our translation, as I touched before, carrieth on the same thing. There we had the preparation as it were, for rain, Clouds gathered and covering the Sun, so making dark weather: Now, faith he, that the rain is coming, the noise thereof sheweth concerning it. The word which we render noise, taken from one root fignifieth any troublesome clamour; and as derived from another root, it signifieth a friend or companion (as I shall touch afterward) But at present leaving that, I shall open sonavit, clama- it according to our own reading, as it signifieth a noise. Some read his noise, that is, Gods noise, he maketh a noise in the air: And this noise of God in the air, is either, first, the noise of the amicin, focius, wind; winds often fore-run great raines; or fecondly, the noise of thunderclaps, that ratling noise heard from the clouds, which come between us and the light; this noise sheweth concerning it, that is, this sheweth fowl weather is coming, or that rain (as we speak) is brewing in the Clouds. Both the bluffering winds and the ratling roaring thunder rell us afore-hand, and give warning, that the weather will fuddenly change, or that rain is at hand.

> Hence Note; God by natural signs gives warning of a change in natural things.

When God is about to fend rain, the noise that is in the Clouds tells the world that 'tis coming. Some are very skilful in observing these things; such we call, weatherwise. From this I would only infer, If God doth fore-shew or give signs of the change that he makes in natural things, then furely he doth much more give his people warning of the changes he is about to make in civil things, in the States and Kingdomes of this world. There are some things which do, as it were, predict or foreshew such and such changes neer, if we were wise to observe them. The Jewes were very inquisitive to know of Christ the figns of the times; These figns they enquired of him, not so much our of curiofity (which had been bad enough) as our of treachery, to intrap him in his words, yet mark what Christ said to to them (Math. 16. 1,2, 3.) He answered and said unto them, when it is evening, ye say it will be fair weather, for the skie is red (ared

(a red skie shewes concerning fair weather) and in the morning it will be foul weather, for the skie is red and lowring. When the skie lowres, or, as here in fab, ween the Cloud cometh bet ween us and the light, that tells us it will be foul weather. Now, faith Christ, do you think that God hath given us such warnings about changes in natural things, and hath he not given figns which may fore-thew changes in other things, which more concerns us? Therefore Christ checks them in the 3d verse, Oye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the skie, and can ye not discern the Signs of the times, that is, what changes God will make in the times? As if he had faid, if you were wife ye might differn the figns of ruine approaching to you and your City. A dreadful black Cloud of destruction hung over the City of Terufalem at that time, as Christ had fore-told them in several places of the Gospel: the time is coming (faith he) when there shall not be left one stone upon another; yet you cannot fee the figns of these things; you are very skilful to discerna fair day & a foul day (there are natural prognoslicks of these things) bur ye hypocrites cannot discern the signs of the times: Do ye not think God hath given you warning, hath he not fore-thewed what he will do with you and with this City? if ye were wife ye might understand that shortly it will be overthrown, and so it was by Titm Vespatian not long after. God gives as clear figns of the changes that shall be in times, as he doth concerning the change of the weather: And that's one thing which doth very much fore-shew it, when God puts it into the hearts of his Ministers unanimously to fore-warn approaching troubles. Such warnings were given to Hiernfalens, not only by Christ, but Josephus, lib. afterward by others. Fosephus in his History reports of one that 7. c. 12. de could not by any punishment be stopt from crying up and down Bello Judsico. the City, for several years, after this manner, A voyce from the east, a voyce from the west, a voyce from the four windes, a voyce against Jerusalem, and a voyee against the Temple. There was also (as the same Author reports) a voyce heard in the Temple, Let us depart hence. The Jewes generally would not believe these voyces, but went on and were angry when any told them of a Cloud coming over their day, yet they found them all verified in the subversion of their city, by the Romans. Such forewarnings were given the Palatinate, and other parts of Germany, before those great evils came upon them. Some way or other God hath

hath alwayes shewed when these showers were coming; and when a people grow weary of their warnings, when they grow more prophane and wicked under them, this is a sure sign, a fatal prognostick, that God is coming with a shower of wrath, and is ready to pour down a storm of ven eance upon them. And surely these warnings, both with respect to natural changes in the Air, and civil changes in the affairs of this Woold, argue the wonderful goodness of God, that he would have us prepare for all dispensations: He will not send a shout to send those great showrs of Judgment upon the world, she would have his people ready and prepared, and therefore by some means or other he tells them before hand what is at hand.

Pecin.

Thus, the noyse thereof sheweth concerning it, or telleth us the storm is coming. But is there nothing else that fore-tells this? Yes, it followeth,

The cattel also concerning the vapour.

על-עולה

The very beast of the field give notice of the vapour. The Hebrew is that which goeth up, so we read in the margin. The rain comes down, and the vapours go up; and the going up of the vapour is an argument of the coming down of the rain. As the moile or thunder in the Clouds fore-sheweth a storm, so the castel concerning the vapour, they tell us the rain is coming down by their

apprehension of the vapour which goeth up.

Some render, not vapour, but plants or herbs, trees or grafs, these go up or ascend out of the earth, as well as vapours. Our translation is plain. The cattel also, the very sheep and oxen, year the sowles of the air will tell when we shall have soul weather; before such stormes come usually they run to shelter, hiding and shifting for themselves as well as they can, against the storm. Cattel presage rain. Pliny in his Natural History speaks much of the natural sagacity that is in beasts, swine, theep and oxen, whereby they perceive change of weather. The Poet Virgil also verifies largely and acurately of these things; reporting how husbandmen that keep cattel will gather by what they see in the cattel what the weather will be. The cattel also concerning the vapour.

Plinius, lib. 18. c. 35. Nasural History. Virgilius, în Georg. l. 1.

Hence Wilson was and Monte the Monte was or other Cod

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Hence Note;

Bruit Creatures, by a natural instinct, perceive the approach-

ing changes of the weather.

And why hath Goo given them that natural instinct? Why are they quick-fented and quick-fighted, yea many times more quickfighted than men are? Surely, it is first, that those poor Creatures may provide themselves of shelter, and not be abroad in the florm, rain or wind, in a time of danger, or inconvenient to them. This may be of use to us. God would teach us by the very dumb Creatures, the Bruits, what our duty is; the Cattel, the Swine, the Sheep will witness against us, if we do not take notice of, nor observe, the signs of the various dispensations of God, or when he is about to vary his dispensations. Can the Catteltell when it will be fowl weather, and are men so flupid (are they especially that profess the Gospel so stupid) that they understand none of these things? The Prophet Feremiah (Chap. 8. 7.) reproves the people of Ifrael upon this account, by the fowles of hear ven (as was shewed upon another occasion, at the 11th Verse of the 35th Chapter) The Stork in the heavens knoweth his appointed time, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow know the times of their coming; that is, they will not stay in any place, where it is not fit not fafe for them to stay, and they will not come to any place till they know all things are suitable and ready for them: But my people knoweth not the judgment of their God, they are more senteless than the very fowls of heaven in this. And therefore the prophet checks them (v.8.) How do ye fay, we are wife, and the Law of the Lord is with us? You count your felves very wife, yet ye are not so wife in this matter as the Stork and the Crane, and the Swallow, for they observe their times, but you do not. It is a great part of our wildom to fee what God is doing, or what he is about to do before he doth it. It is faid (Prov. 22. 3.) A prudent man foreseeth an evil. When evil is come every one can see it (though some will scarce see in then, as the Prophet complained (1sa. 26. 11.) When thy hand is lifted up they will not see it) but usually that wich is done or doing we can fee; when we feel an evil we can fee it; but the prudent, that is the godly man, fore-feeth the evil. How comes he to fore-fee it? not by any hellish divina ion, not by star-gazing, not by asking the Devil what shall be hereafter, as Saul did; he would fore-fee the evil, I11 2

but he went to the Devil, to a Witch for it (I Sam, 28.) Now a godly man doth not fore-fee the evil by any fuch wayes or means, but by a diligent collection of things, comparing one with the other, or by the connection of causes with their effects, and of antecedents with their consequents; by these he plainly fore-seeth that fuch or fuch an evil is coming, even as the beaft fore-fees the form is coming by the vapour, or that weh goeth up. The prudent man fore-feeth an evil approaching by way of argument. For thus he reasons, if God be an unchangable God, if he be as holy, as just, as powerful, as zealous, as jealous now, as ever he was, and if fin be the same as ever it was, if sin be as fowl in it self, if it be as learthsome and as burthensome to God, if it be as pernicious and hurtful to man now, as ever it was, then furely when men run fuch and such finful courses, such and such will be the effects, such and fuch the fruits. Thus a prudent man feeth the effect in the cause, ine consequent in the antecedent. This was Solomons purpose, when he said (Eccles. 2. 14.) The wife mans eyes are in his head. You may fay, so are the sools eyes too; Where are his eyes else? But when Solomon faith, The wife mans eyes are in his head, his meaning is, they are there to purpose; the wise man well obferves and marks how things go, and whither things tend, he confiders how things go, and whicher things are going; but the fool walketh in darkness, that is, he walketh as if he had no eyes in his head, as if his eyes were in his heels, not in his head. It is said, (1 Chron. 12. 32.) concerning the men of Iffachar, They were wife concerning the times, and to know what Ifrael ought to do : They knew what the times required, and what God required in those times, what special duties were incumbent upon them, from the dispensations of God. It is a great mercy, and a great part of our wisdom to be thus wise, and if we are not, we shall be found and judged more bruitish than the bruit beast, for the Cattel also give warning concerning the vapour, they give notice when rain and storms are coming.

Thus I have held out the sence of the words, as they are laid

down plainly in our franflation.

But there are very many differences among Interpreters (as was hinted before) in the reading and rendring of these words; all which arise from some difficulty in the Gramatical construction and copious signification of the Hebrew text. I might give

you more than three and three several interpretations of these words, but, as I said before, I should rather perplex the Reader than confirm him; yet I shall name three, when I have only shewed which words in the text occasion this variety in translation. First, the word rendred by us Clouds, fignifieth also the hands. Secondly, the word rendred cometh between, fignifieth an Interceffor, or one that prayeth, as also an opposer, who stands up against and refifts the force of another. Thirdly, the word rendred noise fignifieth (when derived from another root) a friend or familiar. Fourthly, the word rendred cattel, fignifieth also possession, or that which is possessed, and taken from another root, emulation or strife. Fifthly, the word which we translate as an Adverbe, alle, fignifieth likewise anger. Sixthly, the word rendred vapour, fignifieth an ascension, or going up; and so plants or herbs, which grow out of the ground and ascend into the air according to their growth, are elegantly expressed by it.

All these differences found in the single tearms, are made use of by Interpreters, as will appear while I give you a taste of three

different translations.

First, The common Latine translator renders thus, In his hands be hideth the Light, and sommands it to come again; he speaks of it, or declares it to his friend, that it is his poffession, and that he may afcend or come to it. This rendring is marvelous different from ours, yet there is some footing for it in the Original, and it may receive a useful sense.

The whole text being accordingly expounded as an argument of Gods great favour to godly men; from whom, though he at any sime hideth the light, yet, tis but for a time, he commands it to return again, and tells them as his friends, light is their posses-

fion, and that at last they shall ascend up into light.

There is a second Classis of Interpreters, who expound these In uraque vole two Verses wholly as a description of the Clouds meeting toge- occurrent sucom ther and affaulting one another, like two great Champions and super occurren-Warriors in battel. The learned Beza translates the first part of te. the 32d Verse conformably to the Vulgar Latine last spoken of, Judicat hoc He hideth the light in either hand, or both hands; and the latter sumulton ejun part of that Verse, together with the whole 33d Verse, in con- amulatio formity to the sense now given; He gives it (namely the light or and deverture assenting) command concerning that which meets or some against Bez.

it (namely where and how to receive the force or charge of the other cloud that is ready to affault it) the noise, the frife, the anger of it against the ascender (or cloud coming up) plainly declareth this. Some of the Jewish Doctors insist much in the description of this conflict between the Clouds above, and the ascending Clouds, concerning which the reader may confult them for further information; but the difficulties of this translation noted by Modern Expositers, especially by Mercer and Merlin, are so many

that it may suffice to name it.

Thirdly, Mr. Broughton, thus, By hands he covereth the light, and chargeth it as man doth pray, declaring his favour towards him, the cattel and also plants. The meaning is (which several others follow in translating and opening this context). That when God coveresh the light or causeth darkness, yet at the intercession or prayer of his people he makes a change and causeth great serenity, giving comfortable times, & thereby declating his favour towards them, yea, and towards the cattel and the plants, which feed upon ascend or grow up out of the earth. Junius contents fully with this sense, whose Translation and gloss upon it I shall present the reader, and submit all to his judgment and consideration; with his hands he hiderh the light (that is, he makes it dark as laying his hand upon it) and he forbids it (namely his hand to hide the light any longer) becamse of him that intercedeth (that is, Noah in the time of the general flood, and the Godly, who according to the example of Nah come to God, Jam. 5.16.) declaring towards him (that is, the Godly man praying and worthiping God) his good will, yea, towards the cattel and fruits of the earth.

These are the most eminent conceptions which I find upon the text; all of them containing truths, and fuch as may occasion useful meditations. But I rather adhere to our own version, in which, as the power of God in changing the weather is held out, so his goodness in giving figns and warnings of it, both by the noises which we hear in the air, and by some unusual actions and motions, which we may see among Cattel here upon the earth.



J O B, Chap. 37. Vers. 1, 2.

1. At this also my heart trembled, and it moved out of its place.

2. Hear attentively the noise of his voice, and the found that goeth out of his mouth.



His Chapter concludes the Conference of Elihu with Job, and it confifts of three parts.

First, In it we have an enumeration, together with a description of divers Meteors, or wonderful works of God in the Air, Thunder and Lightning, Snow and Rain, yet before Elibus speaks of them, he doth two things by way

of Preface, to lead us with more reverence towards God, into that discourse of Nature, in which much of God appeareth.

That, Elihu tells us, how himself was affected, either with the present sense, or with the fore-apprehension of those things concerning which he was about to speak; At this also my heart trembled, and it moved out of its place.

Secondly, He stirs up the whole Auditory then present, and all others, to a diligent attention and serious consideration of them.

Vess. 2. Hear attentively the noise of his voice, and the sound that

goeth out of his month.

Having poken thus in way of Preface, Eliha proceeds, first, to a description of Thunder, with its immediate fore-runner, as to our since (the eye being quicker to receive its object than the ear) though in truth, and according to reason, its companion, the Lightwing, in the three Verses following (3, 4, 5,) concerning both which he shewes,

First, that they go not at random, but have a guide, he direct-

ethit, that is, the Thunder and Lightning.

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Thirdly, He speakes of the irrevocableness of Gods decrees and orders about them, at the 4th Verse, After it a voice roareth, &c. and he will not stay them when his voice is heard.

Fourthly, He concludes about these and many other works of God, with an Elogie of all his works. First, In their greatness; Secondly, In their incomprehensibleness; or he concludes them, not only great, but wonderful and incomprehensible (Vers. 5.) God thundereth marvelously with his voice, he doth great things which we cannot comprehend.

Having thus spoken of Thunder and Lightning, he proceeds, Secondly, To shew the power of God, which he describes in Snow and Rain.

First, from their efficient cause, at the 6th Verse.

Secondly, By their effects. First, Towards men, in the 7th Verse. Secondly, Upon or towards irrational Creatures, the Beasts of the earth, at the 8th Verse.

Thirdly, He fets forth the Power of God in the Winds, concerning which we have,

First, Their original, whence they come (Vers. 9.)

Secondly, Their effects, or what they produce, cold and frost, in the latter part of the 9th and 10th Veries.

Fourthly, He treats of the Clouds, and about them he declares four things.

First, The melting or dissolving of them into Rain, at the 1 1th Verse.

Secondly, The scattering and dispersing of them by the wind, in the latter part of that Verse.

Thirdly, The disposing and ordering of them by the counsel and command of God, at the 12th Verse.

Fourthly, Their uses, ends and operations, at the thirteenth Verse.

Thus we have the first general part of the Chapter opened, containing a description of the Meteors, or manifold works of God in the Air, all which hold forth and advance his mighty power and righteous administrations in this world, towards

wards the children of men; which was the poynt that Elihu had laboured in all along, and undertaken to demonstrate.

In the second part of this Chapter, Elibu (upon the whole mat-

ter) gives Job serious counsel and admonition, wherein,

First, He stirs him up to consider these wonderful works of

God, at the 14th verse.

Secondly, He afferts and urgeth the weakness and inability of Fob (or indeed of any man) to understand them fully ; this he doth,

First, In general, at the beginning of the 15th verse, Doft thou

know when God disposed them? &c.

Secondly, More particularly, in their feveral kinds.

First, Of the Rainbow, at the latter end of that 15th verse, and caused the light of his Cloud to shine.

Secondly, Of the Clouds and their various motions, at the

16th verse.

Thirdly, Of the heat according to the wind (verf. 17.)

Fourthly, Of the Heaven or Skie (verf. 18.)

All which were such as he could not give a clear account of, and therefore at the 19th verse, Elihu bids Job do it if he could, as for himself he durst not venture upon it (verse. 20.) nor can any (faith he vers. 21. 22.) see far into these natural things, or into the nature of these things. These are the special poynts of his admonition to Job; and from these he passeth to the

Third Part, or Conclusion of the Chapter, and of his whole

discourse with Job; wherein,

First, He makes a recapitulation of, or sums up all that he had faid of the unsearchableness of God in his works; this he doth in the former part of the 23d verse.

Secondly, He fets down positively what God is, in a three-fold

Excellency.

First, Of Power.

Secondly, Or Judgment.

Thirdly, Of plentiful Justice, at the middle of the 23d verse. Thirdly, He tells us what God will not do, at the end of the 23d verie, He will not afflet ; and from all, makes two inferences at the the 24th verfe.

First, That therefore men ought to honestr and to fear him.

Secondly, That therefore God is not in the reverence nor fear Kkk

of any man, in the close of that 24th verse; He respectite not any that are wife of heart.

Thus I have given a prospect of the whole Chapter. Now to particulars, beginning with those two verses by which Eliku leads in his discourse of those wonderful workes of God.

First, By shewing how himself was affected with them. Secondly, By calling upon others to be affected as himfelf was.

Verf. I. At this also my heart trembled.

trembled ? I shall give a double answer to that querie.

At this, that is, by reason of this, or for this cause, or because of this; so the word is rendred (Gen. 2.23.) She (faid Adam of his wife, or Second-felf) shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. So here, at this, or for this cause, my heart trembles b. It may here be questioned, what it was at which the heart of Eliba

First, Some conceive that while Elibu was speaking about, or about to speak further of that marvelous work of God, the Thunder, God, to confirm what he had faid, or should say, at that very instant caused it to thunder, that so Job might be in a more humble reverential frame, and so the better prepared to receive what Elihuhad further to say unto him. That there was a storm at or about that time, may appear from the first verse of the 38th. Chapter; then the Lord answered Fob out of the whirlwind, and said; and we find that God hath often given great discoveries of himself in or by Thunder and Lightning. In Thunder and Lightning the Law was delivered to Moses on mount Sinai (Exed. 19. 6.) And to affect the people of Ifrael, when they had provoked God by their peremptory and discontented way of asking a King, Samuel coming to deal with them about it (1 Sams. 12. 16, 17, 18.) said, Stand and see this great thing, which the Lord will do before your eyes. Is it not wheat-harvest to day? I wik call unto the Lord, and he shall send Thunder and Rain, that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great. And the Lord sent Thunder and Rain that day, even while Samuel was speaking, for their conviction and humiliation, as the next words thew, and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. Thus possibly while Elihu was about to speak of Thunder, for the humbling of Fob, God commanded it to Thunder for his deeper humiliation: and if so, the cause why

Elibustrembled is apparent enough; The terrible Thunder-claps

which.

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which then rent the Clouds and even shook she earth, might well cause him to tremble.

Secondly, We may understand these words (at this my heart trembleth) with reference to the whole matter which Eliha had before him; what he had begun to speak, and was further to speak of Gods dreadful power, might shake his beart with astonishmenr. The due apprehensions of the greatness of God, may soon strike man into a fit of trembling; it did Job, as himself confessed at the 21th Chapter of this Book (v. 5,6.) Mark ye, and be aftenished, and lay your band upon your mouth; for when I remember, I am afraid, and trembling takes hold of my flesh: As if he had faid, while I duly consider the great things that I have spoken, & those greater things find abyfus (if greater may be) that I am about to speak, I cannot but trem- in monton veble, and stand as one filled with astonishment. How was the Apo-nerit, expans-Ale Paul amazed at that most mysterious dispensation of God in sit cor meum, casting off his ancient people the Jewes, the seed of Abraham his &c. Brent. friend, for so long a time! (Rom. 11. 33.) O the Depth! &c. At

this my heart trembleth, that is, I am heartily afraid.

The heart is here put for the whole inner man, or for all the powers of the foul; and the word rendered to tremble, notes a diffurbance of the whole man, both of foul and body. the Septuagint antanima, ex render it by the same Greek word used (Math. 2.3.) where cura out metu (upon the wife mens coming from the East, to inquire concerning mali. the King of the Jewes) it is said, When Hered heard this, he was a race xon. troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. That news of a new King put Sept. them into a grievous fright, they knew not what to make of it, nor which way to turn themselves, in such a turn of affaires, in fuch a new world as that new-born King might make. This word is else-where in Scripture used to note the suddenest surprize and the strongest possession of fear. Thus when IJaac, through the subtilty of Rebekab, had given the bleffing to Jacob which he intended for Esau, 'tissaid, that upon the appearance of his mistake, he trembled exceedingly (Gen. 27. 33.) Doubtless it did wonderfully aftonish the good old man, to think, that God should carry him beyond and beside his own purpose, to bless the yonger brother instead of the elder. This strange disappointment by the overruling providence of God, put him to a stand, and troubled his thoughts more than a little; especially, because he was now taught, that by his carnal affections to Esau, he was running quite cross to Kkk 2

the mind of God, revealed (Chap. 25.23.) Read the same force of the word (Exod. 19. 16.) to which the Apostle referring, faith (Heb. 12. 21.) So terrible was the fight, that Moses said, Lexceedingly fear and quake. Read also the same importance of the word 1 Sam. 4.13. Chap. 14.15. Such was the Condition of Elibn, he was deeply affected, trembling took hold of him. The Spirits run to the heart in a time of fear, or upon a sudden fright, as Citizens to the Castle in a day of danger; and then the outward members (being deferted by the spirits) grow cold and tremble. There is a natural infirmity called, The palpitation or trembling of the heart; But this of Elihu was supernatural, at least, some-what more then natural, as arifing either from the confideration of what God had done, or of what himself was about to speak; and not only did his heart tremble, but

Was moved out of its place.

Which is added to fet forth the exceeding greatness of that fear which seized upon him. The Text speaks as if his heart were indeed removed or taken out of his body. It is usual in Scripture to affirm that as done which is like to be done. The ship was said to be bro-Efflusit. Sept. ken (John 1.4.) and the net (Luke 5.6.) because both were in eminent danger of breaking. We fay of a man in great fear, his heart is ready to leap out of or out at his mouth. One of the Ancients rendershere, my heart is pluckt out; the septunging, It floweth out; the Salit seu substite Chaldee paraphrase, takes up the former expression; my heart leaps or jumps, which as it doth sometimes for joy, so often for fear, or at the unexpected appearance of danger. Some conceive by this moving of his heart out of his place, that Elihu was in a kind of vocant, pato de- extafie, that he was, as it were, carried out of himfelf, upon the notari, que (ut hearing of that dreadful voice of God, the thunder; taking it so.

> Note. Thunder is a terrible thing;

It hath made and may make the flourest heart to tremble. One -. Et bumanas of Chris Apostles was called Lebbens (Mat. 10, 3.) as much as to say the hearty man, or all-heart; Now he that is Lebbem a man of the greatest courage, the most hearty man, may be put to a tremble Ovid. 1. Met. at this, when he heares it thunder. Heathens have spoken much of this, and by a peculiar word have called those who are much

amazed

Cerdi palpirano G totim animæ concurfus ad cor in pavoribus evidens oft. Galen. a repoun, Evuljum eft. August. Emotum est. Rieron. Tharg. Hù verbù excessum quem effectus causam) admirationsm cum pavore subsequi solet. Bold. motura toni-

trua mentes.

amazed men thander fruck, men being so much amazed at the sound Hos Latinus, of thunder. The Roman Historian reports of that great Emperour, Attonitos vowho commanded all the world, and made the nations to tremble, cat. Attonition that yet he himself trembled at this. Augustus Casar, was so vicini fulminin afraid of thunder, that when-ever he travelled abroad, he caused to some to the skin of a Sea Casse to be carried about with him, because it nitruum dant was in their superstition believed to be an Amulet or preservative suporem. Serv: against any bure by thunder. And the same Author tells us of ano-intertium against any nurt by thunder. And the lame rather tens to a fraid of Enid.
ther of that ranke, a heathen Roman Emperour, that was so afraid of Tonitrus dici thunder, that he would hide his head when he heard it, and some-videtur a tertimes ran under a bed for shelter. I shall have further occasion to rendo, quod speak of the terribleness of thunder, at the 4th and 5th verses; I comerreat hotouch it here, because, according to our interpretation, this was it minem. Aliqui, a at which the heart of Elibu trembled.

Secondly, Taking the words more generally, as this trembling cumsonitu fiat might arile from the confideration of any other of the wonderful de irrust.

works of God,

The great appearances of God in his power may and should affect us even with feare and trembling.

The heart of man may wel move out of his place when he confidershow dreadful God is in his place, and what wonders he both doth and can do. David casting his eye up to the heavens and the hoffof them (Pfal. 8.) concludes with admiration (v.8.) O Lord our God, how excellent is thy Name in all the world! They who have but little knowledge of the works of God, cannot be much affected with them; they who know them deeply cannot, but be deeply affected with them. Fooles and ignorant persons slight or lightly pass by any thing that God doth or speaks; but they who are wife hearted will lay both his Word and Works to heart, their hearts will tremble and be moved out of their place. Holy King David adviseth the Kings and Judges of the earth to serve the Lord with fear and tore joyce with trembling (Pl. 2 11.) And the holy Apolile Paul exhorteth all Christans to work out their Salvation with fear and trembling (Philip. 2. 12.) Now if we are to cremble in our dayly service, how much more under dreadful pro-

For the close of this poynt, remember there is a four-fold trembling

tone de ruendo, Suctonius de Augusto & Caligu'a.

bling or moving of the heart at the appearances of God, or at the discoveries of his Power and Glory in his Word and in his Works.

First, That which is natural. (Ifa. 7. 2.) When it was told the house of David, saying, Spria is confederate with Ephraim; his heart (that is, the heart of Ahaz) was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the Wood are moved with the wind. And when Felix heard Paul reasoning of righteousness, temperance, and the judgment to come, he trembled: I se Judge trembled at the voyce of the prisoner. Tis natural for man to fear and tremble at the report of any truth which renders himguilty, or of any trouble which over-masters his ability to withstand or avoyd it.

Secondly, There is a Legal trembling, proceeding from a spirit of bondage, or the dreadful apprehensions of the wrath of God against sin (Rom. 8. 15.) This in many is precedenceous to their true conversion, and, as a needle, makes way for the spirit of grace and adoption, by which thread they are united & fastned unto God through faith, & walk in a child-like fearbefore him all their days.

Thirdly, There is a penal or judiciary fear and trembling. God in judgement sometimes fills the heart of finful man with fear, as the punishment of his fin. They who have no fear of God in their hearts to keep or over-aw them graciously from finning and living in a course of sin, are delivered up to a spirit of sear, which continually pursueth them with dreadful apprehensions of the wrath of God, and of some imminent and impendent evils, ready to fall upon them for their fins; A dreadful found is in their ears (as Eliphas rold Feb, Chap. 15.21.) yea, as he speaks there (vers. 24.) trouble and anguish make him afraid; they prevail against him, as a King ready to battel. The Lord threaten'd it as one of the fore Judgments that he would bring upon his People the Jewes, for their disobedience (Deut. 28.65.) I will give thee a trembling heart; yea, he threaten'd (Isa. 52.17.) to give them the dregs of the Cup of trembling. Ezekiel (Chap. 12.18.) was commanded to tremble, as a fign to the People of that penal fear and trembling which God would send upon them. Such was that trembling spoken of (Ezek. 26.16.) Then all the Princes of the Sea shall come down from their Thrones, and lay away their Robes, and put off their broidered garments, and shall cloath themselves with tremblings. Doubtless they had little mind to such change of rayment, they had rather have been cloathed with raggs; but the

Lord would make them do it. And as those consederate Princes or friends of Tirus should cloath themselves with trembling, so it is prophehed (Zech. 15.2.) that Ternsalem should be, not only a burthensome stone, but a sup of trembling to all her enemies. As if the Lord had said, This shall be their punishment who would make my Jernsalem tremble, I will make them tremble at the remembrance of Jerusalem, orat the sight of those great things which I

will do against them, and for Ferusalem.

Fourthly, There is a spiritual, a gracious trembling and moving of the heart; that's it which this point calls us to, and to which, in those places lately mentioned, both David (Psal. 2. 11.) and the Apostle (Phil:2.12.) call us to. It was well with Ephraim, when it was thus with him (Hof. 13.1.) When Ephraim spake trembling he was exalted, that is, when he was in a trembling, humble, self-denying frame, he prospered, and all things succeeded well with him. The Lord is never better pleased with us, than when he sees us in these tremblings (Ifay. 66. 2.) To him will I look that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word; These trembling ones are the men that God hath an eye upon and respect unto. The propher Habakkuk spake of himself (Chap. 3.16.) much like Elihu in the text, When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, &c. The prophet fore-faw a day of trouble, and trembled at it, and this gave him affurance that he should not tremble when he faw ir, for (faid he in the next words) I trembled in my felf that I might rest in the day of trouble. The more we tremble in our selves, the more rest we have in God. None have so little fear when trouble comes, as they who fear before it comes. Neab, by faith moved by fear, prepared an arke to the faving of his house (Heb. 11.7.) Thus to fear a flood is the best way to escape it. Tis not courage, but stupidity, not to fear and tremble, when we hear of the judgaments of God. They who tremble graciously shall never tremble despairingly. At this my heart trembleth, &c.

Elibu having thus shewed how himself was affected, with a gracious fear and trembling, labours to affect others also with the same-

fear, in the next verse.

Vers. 2. Hear attentively the noise of his voice, and the found that goeth out of his mouth.

We have here a doubling of the word in an unusual way. Time Hebraigne do audite, nam infinitum postponieur; ego mbil aut parum referre puto, hoe an illo mods efferas. Druf.

Plus oft, inquit Hebrailme is ordinarily read, hearing hear, but in this place, 'cis Rab. David, bear in hearing; which one of the Jewith Doctors faith, hath a greatquam audien- er emphalis than the ordinary Hebrailme hearing hear. Others find nothing of such a difference in those differing Heb: aismes : however both call for greatest heed in hearing what is spoken, when 'cis either said hear in hearing, or hearing hear; we should, as our translation gives the sense fully,

Hear attentively.

There is a two-fold hearing.

First, A hearing with the ear of the body: there needs little flirring up of that ear to attend the voice of thunder here spoken of; that speaks so loud that men cannot (if they would not) but hear, that commands audience and attention, that boreth the ear and makes its own way. The deafest adders can hardly stop their eares fo, as not to hear the voyce of that (not muttering charmer, but) but rouzing speaker, Thunder.

Secondly, There is a hearing with the ear of the mind, a spiritual hearing, such as the Prophet spake of (Hab. 3. 2.) O Non folum au. Lord, I have heard thy speech, &c that is, I have heard it fully, clearditum excitat, ly, understandingly, affectionately, obedientially. Elihu is here sed intelligent stirring up, not so much the outward sence, as the affections, with all tiam postulate the powers of the inner man, to attend and take notice of that which was then to be heard; what was that? Hear attentively

Commotio, per-

turbatio animi

præ metu vel

do cum tremo-

Omnew Soni-

tum articula-

tum aut inarti-

præ ira.

The noise of his voice.

The word here rendred noise, signifies both an angry noise, and an awful fear (Pf. 4.4.) such a noise as causes fear, or such a fear as is caused by a dreadful noise; Hence some read the words, Plear Audite audien his voyce with trembling; we lay, hear the notfe of his voice.

According to the former interpretation the noise of his voice is re voiem ejus. the noise of thunder; that, if any thing, makes a noise, a dreadful noise, as was toucht before, a noise like the roaring of a Lion. Hear

the noise

Of his voice.

eulatum signifi-The word voice is taken in general for any found, articulate or eat, Tingenere quencumque inarticulate (Ezek. 1.24.) and it may very well fignific thunder, because thunder in several scriptures is called absolutely, A voice,

the voice of God, and whole volyes of Thunder are called voices of God (Exod. 9.28.) Pharaob entreated Moses, that he would entreat the Lord that there might be no more mighty thandrings, we put in the margin, voyces of God. It is said (Exod. 20. 18.) the people saw the Thundrings, the Hebren is, voices; the meaning is, they heard the Thundrings, as if they had been so many voices, or they heard as it were voyces when it thundered. Thus 'tis faid (Rev. 4.5.) Out of the Throne proceeded lightnings, and thundrings, and voices. Again (Chap. 10. 3.) seven thunders uttered their voyces. Hear attentively the noise of his voice, that is, the noise of of his Thunder speaking aloud and alose in the air.

And the found that goeth out of low mouth.

The word imports secret, filent meditation, as also an audible found by voice or words spoken; and it may be applyed particu- to, proprie me-Lirly to that more gentle, quier, or whilpering found of thunder, of duanto. Sermowhich I shall have occasion to speak further at the 4th verse. Some nem etiam fig-Thunders speak very loud, others give a kind of gentle found. "Thicat ore pro-Philosophy tells us, that this difference in thunder ariseth from the lature. different conflicution of the clouds in which it is bred, and through which it breaks. The greater may more properly be expressed by the words in the first part of this verse, The noise of his voice, and the lesser by these in the latter part, The sound that goeth out of his Tonitruorum mouth.

Now, Whether it be the noise of his voice, or a whispering foft mumur, aliud found, both or either must be attended; Hear attentively the found genus est acre.

That goeth out of his mouth.

Thunder is said to go out of the mouth of God, as words go out alind frangor of the mouth of man; and as men, especially the minds of honest est subitten de men, are known by the words which go out of their mouths, so God vehemens quo maketh himself known to the world, or makes the world both edito concidum know him and fear him in his power and greatness by the noise and bemines, &c. Sen. 1. 6. Nat. found of thunder.

Elibu chargeth fob to attend diligently this noise, this sound, and he calleth it the noise of Gods voice, the found that goeth out of his mouth.

unum genus eft cuius fit grave quod crepitum magis diccerim

Hence observe, First; God speaks to man in Thunder, or, Thunder is the voice of God toman :

Posta Jovem tonantent O Bonitruum voeem Jovi vocare solent.

elt divinum effe

disitur.

And so is often called in Scripture; the 29th Pfalme, almost throughout, is a proof of it, Thunder being there seven times called, The Voice of the Lord. The very Heathens had that apprehension of Thunder, calling it, the Voice of the Gods. Tupiter was sunamed, Thundring Jove. Here we have Johovah, the true God, the living God, fending out his Voice in Thunder. That Voice spoken of by David (Psal. 68, 33.) is usually interpreted of Thunder. Lo, he doth fend out his Voice, and that a mighty Voice. Thunder may be called the Voice of God in a double respect.

First, Because it is a great and mighty voice; and then those Quod magnum words (of God) have only the force of an Epithete. As the Cedars of God, the Rivers of God, are great Cedars and Rivers, so a great Voice is called the Voice of God. God is great, and therefore

great things are ascribed to him.

Secondly, Thunder is called the Voice of God, because God formes, and puts it forth by his power, as a man doth his voice. God may be said to utter his Voice when he sends out the Thunder: And as Thunder is put forth by, or speaks from God, so it puts forth, or speaks much of God, it speaks and puts forth much of the Power and Majesty of God. When it thunders, we should think we hear God, the God of glory speaking to us. Some will excuse themselves, they are ignorant, they have never been taught to know God: But did such never hear it thunder? that reacheth much of God, so much as will make them inexcusable, who obey him not, who tremble not at his Power and Majesty. Thunder calls for, and more, it commands, our fear of, our reverence and submission unto God, especially when God, together with this voice, fends his arrows, bolts or bullets, to do great things against his enemies, as he did against Pharach (Ezod. 9. 23.) and against the Philistines (1 Sam. 7. 10.) Yea, the Lord threatened to distress Ferusalem with Thunder, and with Earth-quake, and with great noise (Isa. 29.6.) Now, if Thunder be the Voice of God, or the poile of his Voice, then take these brief Inferences From it. First,

First, Let us see what a powerful and mighty God we have! When it thunders, every believing foul may fay, This is the Voice of my Father; what cannot he do for me that can speak thus?

Secondly, If God hath such a dreadful Voice, if he thunder with his Voice, we should learn to secure, arm, and sence our selves against the dread and danger of Thunder, by the actings of Faith in him, and of Repentance and godly Sorrow for our finnings against him. Some of the Heathens have given pittiful counsel what to do in time of thunder. Seneca was a wife man, yet he di- Adversas tomirects to poor shifts, in such extreamities; Theremedies (saith rum minas subhe) against Thunder and the Batteries of the heavens, are under-terranese doground houses, caves or holes of the earth, to hide our selves in mu, to defall. These were the best helps he could advise his Roman Gallants to, in altum sewhen God uttered his mighty voice in Thunder. But Christians func. Sen.lib. know better how to hide themselves, even in the goodness of God, 6. Natur. against those terrible appearances of his Power.

Thirdly, If God speak with such a Voice as this in the Air, take heed of flighting his Voice whensoever he speaks in the Church, as Athiests and Epicures do. He who speaks so loud in Thunder can thunder upon us at any time. The Word preached, if not obeyed, will at last come upon all those who obey it not,

with as great a terror as Thunder.

Fourthly, Let us not be amazed and frighted at Thunder as

Heathens or Unbelievers.

Fifthly, Let us not think lightly of it, as if it either came by chance, or meerly from natural causes.

Sixthly, Let us fear the God of Thunder, not fear Thunder

Some have superstitiously thought Thunder was a God, and adored it : so 'tis reported of the Lithuanians anciently, and Lithuani fale possibly some of them do so to this day.

Secondly, In that Elibu calls so earnestly for attention to this purabant, &

voice, Hear attentively the noise of his Voice,

Those things which are most easie to be heard, possibly may not at all be understood.

Who doth not hear when it thunders? but how few are there who attend or understand the Thunder, or hear Thunder atten-LII 2 cively?

quell. cap. 4.

men deum esse propterea illud adorabant. Cromerus, I. 15. Hift. Pol. gively? God speaks to us, not only with a still voice, few hearing or artending him, but though he rhunders few attend him; yea, thole works of providence which speak lowder than Thunder, and shine clearer than the Lightning, yet are neither heard nor seen. As When his hand is lifted up some will not see (Ha.26.11.) So when his Voice is lifted up, when 'is lifted up, not only like a trumper, but like thunder, when he speaks most audibly, year most terribly, some will not hear; and he is not heard by many, much less diligently attended to, how loudly, how terribly foever he speaketh. The Lord often thunders by the voice of his Word; what are his terrible threats but loud thunder-claps? yet few hear, or though they hear, yet they attend not. Not to hear the voice of God in his Word, is as if you did not attend to the voice of Thunder. Every word of God, though spoken with a still voice, hath a greater force in it than Thunder from the Clouds. As the terrible works of God are fignified by Thunder (Rev. 10. 3, 4.) So the terrible words of God, his threatning words against impenitent finners, are resembled to Thunder. And therefore such as the Lord fitted among his own Apostles for that dispensation, are called in Scripture Sons of Thunder (Mark 3. 17.) And they who difpence the Word with a strong voice and siery zeal, are truly so called to this day, and may be faid both to Thunder in their Exhortation, and to Lighten in their Conversation. And indeed the Word of God truly and faithfully dispensed by any is like Thun-

First, As Thunder, so the Word spoken is the Voice of God, and a more excellent and distinct Voice than Thunder; that only strewing in general that God is, or that he is great and powerful; this shewing us distinctly, who and what God is, and what

he requirerh of us.

Secondly, Thunder throwes down and diffipates high things;

So doth the Word of God (2 Cor. 10.5)

Thirdly, Thunder is irrefistable by any power of man, it will make its way through all opposition; so is and doth the Word of God.

Fourthly, Thunder pierceth very subtilly, it reacheth the bones quire through the flesh; the Word of God doth more, it divideth soul and spirit, and the joynts and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. 4. 12.)

Fifthly, Thunder breaketh the hardest things which result it, but not soft things; so the Word of God breaks the stout, but binds up the contrict spirit; it refifts the proud, but giveth grace to the humble (Jam. 4.6.)

Now if the Word of God be in all these respects like Thunder, Let us not only hear, but attend, or as the text saith, hear attentive-

ly the found of his voice.

If any ask, when do we both hear and attend with the inward and outward ear, the Thunder of God, or his voice both in his works

and in his word? I answer,

First, When we are stirred up to high and holy thoughts of God. We are never rightly affected with the Word of God, till our hearts are wrought up to, and deeply, at least truly, affected with the God of the Word.

Secondly, When our hearts are raised up in thankfulness for any discoveries of God in his goodness and mercy to us, who can so easily destroy us by his power. He that trembles at this voice of God, and bath no sense nor tast of his goodness, nor is moved to praise and serve him, trembles only like a bruit beast.

Thirdly, When we learn to depend and hang upon him for all, as he that can do all things graciously for us, as well as speak so terribly to us; then we hear diligently the noise of his voice, and the

found that goeth out of his mouth.

For the close of this matter I shall only adde; That though we ought to be affected with the voice of God in his Word, as with his voice in Thunder, yet let us not stay in that, which notes chiefly, if not only, that dread of God which the word leaves upon our spirits; but let us look after and labour for that effect of the Word, which like the beames and light of the Sun, may warme our hearts with joy, and leave strongest impressions of the kindness and favour of God upon them. Mr. Forbes, opening that Scripture (Rev. 14. 2.) where St. John saith, He heard a voice from heaven, and that of three sorts.

First, He heard a voice, as the voice of many Waters.

Secondly, As the voice of a great Thunder.

Thirdly, He heard the voice of harpers harping with their harpes. Upon confideration of this threefold voice, which St. John heard, the fore-named worthy Author, takes up a meditation to this purpose. The word of God (saith he) bath three degrees of operation in the hearts of men.

First,

First, It comes into mens eares, as the sound of many waters, which is a kind of confused noise, and commonly bringeth neither terror nor joy, but a wondering acknowledgment of a strange force, and more than humane power; as we read of those (Mark.1.) who having heard the word of Christ were astonished at his dostrine (v.22.) and were all amazed (v.27.) insomuch that they questioned among themselves, what thing is this? what new dostrine is this?

But knew not what to make of it.

The second degree is, that the Word of God cometh to the ear of man like Thunder, which causeth not only wonder, but greater astonishment and amazement. Both these may be in a wicked prophane person, and are often sound upon common professors.

But shere is a third degree or effect of the Words operation, which (strictly taken) is proper and peculiar to the Elect, and that is, when the Word heard is as the voice of harpers harping with their harpes; that is, when the Word doth not only affect us with admiration, or strike the heart with assonishment and terrour, like the found of many waters, and the voice of Thunder; but also filleth it with sweet peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, when the Word is like melodious musick to the soul, ravishing us with divine delights, and raising us up to a heavenly life, while we are here so journing on this earth.

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J O B, Chap. 37. Verf. 3, 4, 5.

3. He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his Lightning unto the ends of the earth.

4. After it a voice roareth: he thundereth with the voice of his excellency, and he will not stay them when his voice is heard.

5. God thundereth marvelously with his voice: great things doth he, which we cannot comprehend.

E Libu having shewed in the two former verses, how much himself was affected with what God then did, or with what himself was about to say concerning the doings of God; having also called upon others for due attention, and laboured to make the same impression upon their spirits that he sound apon his own; he proceeds to speak to the special matter.

First, To the workes of God in those terrible fiery Meteors, Thunder, and Lightning, which he doth in the three verses now under discussion; and then goeth on to speak of other wonderful works of the wonder-working God, in the following part of this Chapter, as was before shewed, in laying open the whole.

Vers. 3. He directeth it under the whole heaven.

This verse holds forth the divine guidance of those things which seem most remote from any guidance; He directesh it under the whole heaven. Here we may consider,

First, In whose hand this guiding power is; He, that is, God directetbit.

Secondly, how far he guideth, or the extent of his guiding power ; 'tis not limited, but universal, far and near, even under the heaven, and to the ends of the earth.

There is some variety, as of reading, so of interpretation, about this verse, arising from the various fignifications of that word which we render directeth; there is a threefold sence given of it. Aliqui a Rabi-

First, As taken from a root which fignifieth to press or squeze, and mice in so its applyed to the pressing of grapes, which causeth the juice or quod off refol-

plain

re, exprimere. Hinc & September ab illis רושר Tifbri dillim, quasi expresso. rtus, quod eo mense fiat Vindemia. Merc.

vere, humesta- liquur of them to flow out: And upon that confideration the seven h month of the year, our September, hath its name among the Jews from this word; because then the Vintage being ready, the ripe Grapes are gathered and prest into Wine. From this notion of the word, some render the text thus, he preffeth or dissolveth it ander the whole heaven; that is, God presseth the Cloud as a bunch of Grapes is preffed (these Interpreters make that the antecedent to it, he pressethit, that is, the Cloud) and so causeth it to rain. Tis God who preffeth and (as I may lay) iqueezeth the Clouds by his power, and then showers fall down and distil upon the earth under the whole Heaven. That's a truth, and some-where else spoken of in this book, where we read of Gods melving or pressing the Clouds as we do a bunch of Grapes or a spung, so causing them co give forth rain.

Secondly, Others derive the word from a root that fignifieth insuerirespice- to behold attentively, to behold and consider: Thus the latine tranre, considerare, flator renders it, he considereth under the whole heaven; that is (according to this interpretation) there is a Providence of God, a considerer. Sed wife and an unerring Providence of God at work in all places, he ner Grammati- confiders and takes notice of all things under heaven, the least motion of the Creature falls under his inspection, He beholdeth, or considereth under the whole beavens; that's a truth also; yet, I conceive (with others) the Grammar of the Text will not well

comply with this reading . Therefore Thirdly, I conclude our own translation most suitable both to propeer afficient the Original text, and to the scope of this whole Chapter. Now, according to our rendring, the word comes from a root which figcalos ipfe con- nifieth to fet a thing right or ftrait, and from that a person who is fiderat. Vulg. right, a man of a right spirit, who squares and orders his actions by a right rule, and to a right end, is expressed (Chap r. 1.) where Fobs character is given by this word, A man perfect and right, we fay, upright, that is, a man that hath right aimes, and walkes by a right rule. Moses (Deut. 32. 15.) calls the people of God (collectively as one man) Jesharun, that is, a people that are or should be right and upright with God. Thus here, be directeth it, that is, God doth, as it were, by a strait line, level or take his aim, when he dischargeth the Thunder in the Cloud: As he that dischargeth his gun, small or great, or shoots an arrow, levels and directs it at a mark, fo the Lord directeth it. What is this it? "Tis

Alii a 710 quasi Deus omnia fub cœlo ca convenit (tum enim dicendum fuevat) neefen-

sus admodum, Merc. Subter omnes

quad est dirigi re, rellificare.

plain, by what followeth in the latter part of the verse, where the Lightning is expressy mentioned, that he meanes the Thunder or the Thunder-bolt, for the Clouds are, in that case, charged with boles: we have had many dreadful inflances, as well in ancient Histories, as in our own time, of Thunder-tolts like Bullets shoet from the Clouds. As if Elika had faid, whither-loever the Thunder-bolt goeth, to what quarter of the world foever 'tis defigned, it receives commission and direction from God, what to do, and where to fall, whom it shall smite, or what mark it shall hit; He directeth it under the whole heaven,

And his Lightning to the ends of the earth.

Naturalists define or describe Lightning thus; 'Tis a bright Pulgur seu co-shining, caused by exhalations fired in and violently breaking out of flamma micthe Clouds. The Hebrew is, his light. The Sun is the fountain of tio ab exhala-Light, and that is eminently Gods Light; but the Light here spo- tioni'm accenken of, is not the ordinary Light Thining in the Air, by the rifing fir, to enubiof the Sun; this Light is Light ning, which is a studden stalling bis emorta. or breaking forth of light from the Clouds; as when a gun is fired Arist. 2. Meor discharged, a light stasheth from it; such is that which Authors teor, cap o. of all soits call Lightning, and here the Scripture calls his Light-ning. At the 3d Verse the Thunder was called his Voice, the Voice of God; and in this, the Lightning is called his Lightning; Elihu appropriates it unto God himself, his Lightning. This Lightning hath more than light in it, it hath heat and fire in it; though we do not alwayes feel ir, yet many have, the effects of heat and fire appearing sadly upon them. And this is such a fire as water cannot quench; and therefore we of en read in Scripture, of Ignis fua natu-Lightning joyned with the Riin (Pfal. 135.7. Fer. 10.17. rain vorticent Fer. 51.16.) which may be remark't as one of the wonders of it. Surging Gini-There is a second, that the Lightning is said to fall from heaven, bit sue probi-When the disciples brought a report back to Child what great bet, ascender; things they had done, what conquests they had got over evil spirits, cadit eaden Christ answered (Lake 10.18.) I saw Satan like Lightning fall necessitate, que from heaven. Lightning falls from he iven; for though Lightning emcultur; with of its own nature (being fiery) should ascend, yet it descends itaque dubit re-through the power of God. Naturalists observe it as a wonder, diving illi virthat the Lightning should de'cend: Seneca demonstrates, it could tus infit, Senot be, unless there were a divine power in it, that the Lightning ness.

should come down from heaven; and as Elihu said before, he directeth it, or the Thunder, under the whole heaven; so we are here to take up that word again, and say, He directeth his Lightning

To the ends of the earth.

Ala, proprie
en ium est
è i mepuyau
sis, ils Sept.

Here is the act, and the extention of the act, to the ends of the earth; the Hob ew is, the mings of the earth, so the word is used (Gen. 1.21.) God created great whales, &c. and every winged fowl. The ends of the earth are called the wings of the earth, because they are the farthest out-stretchings of the earth; as a bird when the flies stretchesh out her wings to the utmost. They are also called, The corners of the earth (Ezek. 7.2.) Thu fon of man, thus faith the Lord God unto the land of Ifrael: an end, the end is some upon the four corners of the land; the H.b.ew is, upon the four wings (or ends) of the earth; as if he had faid, an end is come upon the East and West, North and South. These four wings, or extreams of the earth, are the same which Ch it called the four minds (Mat. 24. 31.) where speaking of the Resurrection at the last Judgment, he shows how all that are raised shall be brought to one place or general Seffion, and he shall fend his angel: with a great found of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his Elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other, that is, from the four ends, corners, skirts, or wings of the earth. The utmost extreamity of a garment or of a land, according to the Hebrew, is called, the wing of it. Now for almuch as Elihu represents God, thus directing both the Thunder and Lightning,

Observe first;

All the motions of the Creature, even the most violent, and to appearance, contingent motions of the Creature, are under the direction, yea, under the dominion of God.

Thunder and Lightning go the way which God appointeth and chalketh out to them; they move not of themselves, they move not whither men or devils would have them, but whither God would have them. The Devils, I grant, have great power in the Air, yet 'tis limited by, and wholly subordinate to the will and power of God. As the reasonable creatures and their motions, that is, the motions of Men and Angels, are under the direction of God, as Jeremiah speaks (Chap. 10.23.) It is not in him that goeth

goeth to direct his own steps. The Hebrew useth a word there which may be rendred to prepare, to establish, or to confirm, neither of which are in him that goeth; we render it according to the present text, it is not in him that goeth to direct his own steps; who directs them then? It is God that directs the steps of man. It is not in the power of man to direct his own steps, he is not able to do it; and besides that, he hath not the liberty or priviledge to do it, he may not do it, he ought not to do it; 'tis the duty as well as the safety of man to leave the direction of his wayes and steps to God. 'Tis God that directs the steps of man, yea, the indirect steps of man are under the mighty power of God; the very wandrings of men are under the guidance of God; the motions, yea commotions, the actions, and the most disturbed actions of man are under a most certain disposure and disposition of God: When men do they know not what, God knows and orders what they do. Now (I say) as God directs reasonable creatures, men or angels, so unreasonable creatures in their motions; the motions of the beafts of the earth, and the motions of the birds of the air, are all directed by God; yea, the motions of the very inanimate creatures, of those that have no motion in or of themselves, but whose motion is by some outward violence and pressure put upon them, even their motion also is directed by the hand of God. Thunder and Lightning are inanimate liveless creatures, they have no motion of their own, but by impression and violence, yet God directs their motion as truly, as he doth the motions of those creatures which move by the most deliberate actings of their own will, reafon, and understanding. What is there so violent in its motion as Thunder? What is there so swift in its motion as the Lightning? of which Christ being about to give his people wa: ning, not to be- Christian mon lieve those deceivers, who say, Lo here is Christ, &cc. saith (Mat, venit class 24. 27.) For as the Lightning cometh out of the East, and shineth autinvisibility ter utillivo. even unto the West, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be; lune, qui jallant that is, as the Lightning instantly passeth from one part of the hea- sa babere ven to the other visibly, so shall the coming of the Son of man be, christum in dea sudden, swift, and visible coming!; Ye shall not need to go into ferto, in urbe, in corners to shew or see him, for he shal come as the Lightning disco-ditione, sed pavering himself to all by the brightness of his coming. There was tam, ut fulmen fuch an apprehension of the swiftness of the Lightning among the An- editum per oncients, that though the Latine word fignifying to Lighten, is accented nialucer. Coc.

Mmm 2

Ad fignificandam bance nubibus fubita lucis eruptio nem m s erat сар. 56.

Providentia

our vags.

long, yet because Lightning is so swift in motion they were wont to pronounce it short; Lightning being so quick and active, they thought it was not suitable to draw it out in speaking by a long pronunciation. But though Lightning have such a violent and swift antiqui media motion, yet its under Gods command and direction, and it shall I'm ba correpta make no more hafte than God will. An arrow flies with a very viout dierent ful- lent and swift motion, yet it is God that directeth the arrow, gee. Sen lib. he directs it more than the man that shoots it; and when a shor is made, as we say, at random, God then di ects it; as in that notable history of Ahab, when he, against the council of God given him by Micaiah, would needs go up to the battel at Ramoth Gilead (1 Kings 22. 34.) the text faith, There was a man who drew a bow at a wenture, we put in the Ma gin, He drew a bow in his simplicity, he had no special inten ion against Akab, he did not aim at Abab when he shot his arrow, but God ca ied it to the right mark, to fulfil that which he had determined and speken conceening Ahab; yea, he directed it not only to the light man, but to the right place, the joynt of his armour. When in bartel, arrows, and darrs, and bullets are fent forth, as io many thunder-bolts, the Lord directs them and hands them whither they shall go, whom they shall hir, and where. God also directeth the thunder-bales of his Word, where and whom they shall hir. And (to the point in general) that the Lord hath a guidance over those things that are most contingent, we may see in that of Moses, when he gave a Law from the Lo-d about the man that goeth with his Neighbour non est incerta to cut Wood; If (faith he) the head slippeth from the helve, and lighteth upon his neighbour that he die, he shall slee into one of those cities and live (Deut. 19.5.) The reason of this Law is expressed (Exod. 21.13.) because in such consingent cases God delivers him into his hand; the man had no intent to his Neighbour, but ferching a blow, the head flieth from the helve, and both bits and kills him; and to shew that this contingency was ordered by God, the text faith, God delivered him into his hand.

> And forasmuch as God hath such a power over the motions of the creature, it may be matter of comfort and incouragement to us, not only with respect to Thunder and Lightning, that we should not fear them, as the heathen, who neither know nor fear God; bur we may take comfort from hence also, with respect to the most violent and hurried motions that we see here below. When

we find men acting like Thunder and Lightning, without deliberation, when they are all in passions and perturbations, yet let us know, these violent motions shall not fall any where by chance or hap hazard, nor by their own sway, but as God appoyers and overrules them; they shall either fall quite besides the marke which men aimed at, and so do no hurt to any, or if they do, God orders what hurt they shall do. He directeth it under the whole heaven. Let us carry this consideration alwayes with us, and it will be a great stay to our minds in all the violent motions of the creature.

Again, from the extent of this divine direction or providence of God, as to these things; He directeth it under the whole heaven, and unto the ends of the earth, that is, every where;

Note; The providence of God reacheth to all places.

His orders go forth into all lands, his dominion is under the whole heavens and unto the ends of the earth (Pfalm. 65.5.) He is the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off up n he Sea. God is not helpful to his people in one place of th earth, and not in another, or helpful to them upon the earth, and no upon the Sea, but to the ends of the earth, and upon the broad fea he is their confidence, that is, they may confide and trust in him wherefoever they are. Hence that exposulation in the prophet (Feremiah 23.23.) Am I (faith the Lord) a God at hand, and not a God afar off? Some would circumscribe and limit the Power of God, as if being a God neer at hand he could not be a God afar off too, or to those who are scattered to the ends of the earth. But while he puts the question, am I a God at hand and not afar off? he puts it out of question, that he is a God afar off as well as at hand. The Syrians said & pleased themselves in their conceit (1 Kings 20.28.) The Lord is God of the bill , but he is not God of the vallies; therefore they would change the battel, as if he could order things here and not there; but all shall find & feel him (as they did) a God both of the hills & of the vallies, a God both of the Land and of the Sea, a God both at hand, and afar off. It is faid of the Empire of the Sun (Plal. 19 6.) his going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing bid from the beat thereof: much more may I say of the Empire of God, his going forth is from one end of the earth to the other,

Qui summa regit extrema non deserit, og qui esiam in diffimilibus, fibi ipsi distimilis non eft. Gregor.

בקול סים Post eum. Vulg. Pro volunte ac jubente ille : ut post deum sit perit. Druf. Anteambulo. nes & pranuncii supremi regis adventantis.

and there is nothing hid from his wildom and government. One of the Ancients gives his fentence clearly with this truth; He (faith he) that ruleth in the highest heavens doth not for sake the ends of utique prasens the earth, he is every where present, and every where alike present: Gequalis est, though the places are unlike, yet the presence of the Lord is a like when need requires it. That's further matter of comfort that under the whole heaven and unto the ends of the earth we may find the Lord ready for us, and disposing all things, not only for good, but for the best. He directeth it &c.

Vers. 4. After it a voice roareth, or, after it he roareth with a voice.

There is another reading of these words, some give it thus: Ellissis prapo- after him a voice reareth, That is, after his command; God willing and giving forth an order for it, a voice roareth, that is, at his command or word the voice roareth, or followeth. As if the scope of Eliha in this Text, were to shew, that neither Thunder nor Lightning stir a foot or haires breadth, till they have a word from God, postille prace. as indeed they do not. For, though Thunder and Lightning may be called Gods Ushers or Heralds that go before him & proclame his approach (Pfal. 18. 12, 13, 14.) yet they follow and come after him; They go before him as to action, yet they come after him as to commission, they go not till he saith go, or hath given them commission to go. That's a profitable reading of the words.

Our translation saith, after it a voice reareth, that is, after the Lightning, or as soon as it hath Lightned a voice roareth. Our experience teacheth us that Thunder followeth the Lightning; which we are not to understand according to the nature of the thing, for so Thunder and Lightning are, as it were, born and brought forth together; there is no difference between them at all in time, but there is a difference as to order, at least as to order in our apprehension; and so the one may be said to come after the other, the Thunder after the Lightning; as when a gun, lester or greater, is discharged, if you are at a distance you may see the fire a confiderable time before you hear the report, and possibly the bullet hits the wark before the found hits to the ear, though the discharge be made in a moment; which some say is because the eye is a quicker sence than the ear, but rather, because light dothin a moment strike through the air, but the found comes by certain circuits, & fercheth a longer compass before it comes at the ear, as hath

Segnius irritant animos demiffs per aurem quam quæ sunt oculis subjetta fidelibus. Horat.

been toucht lately before, as also at the 26 verse of the 28 chapter. And besides this, or anyother reason of the thing in nature, constant experience teacheth us that we see the light first and then hear the voice; and therefore Eliku speakes here very congruously to both, After it a voice roareth. And as the reason of this in nature (as was she wed) is that more speedy passage of the light through the air than of the sound, so a moral reason may be given of it, which take in this observation.

God mindes or warnes ses of his Judgments before he fends them. Fulguratio

When you see Lightning you say there will be Thunder by and fulminatio emiby; as natural Lightning gives warning of Thunder, so God gives nit, illa (ut na warning from his word, and providences, when a Thunder-clap dicam) cominatio judgment, in any kind, is coming. God never sends a judgment, to see so so judgment, but we hear of it before we seel it; God speaks before he strikes jaculatio cure (Matth. 24.) Behold, I have told you before. Lightning tells us is use. Sen. lib. Thunder is at hand. God doth not use to strike his people with a 2. Nat. Quest. Thunder-bolt, before he hath given them notice by a stash of cap. 12. Lightning; indeed judgments alwayes surprize the wicked; how much Lightning soever hath been dashed in their eyes, yet the Tounder comes unawares. The day of the Lord will at least come as a snare upon all carnal men, though they have had frequent calls to prepare for it. God in the course of nature teacheth us the course of his providence, Lightning gives warning that Thunder is coming, and happy are they who take warning by his Lightning, and select the stroke of his Thunder; after it a voice

Roareth.

It hath been already shewed that Thunder is the voice of rugivit propri-God; here Elihu tells us what kind of voice it is, it roareth. The um leonu. word signifieth the roaring of a lion, 'tis also applyed to the roaring of the Sea, that's a dreadful roaring. Naturalists tell us there are several sorts of Thunder; every Thunder is not a roaring Thunder, they give sive or six gradual denominations of Thunder;

First, There is a streeking or crashing Thunder.

Secondly, There is a hissing I hunder, as when red hot iron is 2. Sibilans. put into water.

Thirdly, There is a cracking Thunder, as when a bladder is bro- 3. Crepans. ken, or a chesnut in the fire.

Fourthly,

4. Tumultuans. 9 Rugions.&c.

Fourthly, There is a rumbling Thunder. We sometimes hear only a rushing in the clouds, no crack of Thunder breaking our. Fifthly, There is a roaring Thunder, as this text speakes, a voice Garcas Me- roareth.

tcorolog.

Sixthly, There is a whiftering Thunder, I may call it a kind of filent of still-voyced Thunder; possibly that was such spoken of (I Kings 19. 12.) After the fire, a field small voice. As also that when Jesus Christ was baptized by John in Jordan (Matth. 3. 17.) And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased; 'Tis conceived, that voice came in a fill whispering Thunder. Such doubtless was that Thunder (Fohn 12. 28, 29.) when Christ prayed, Father, glorifie thy Name; then same there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorifie it again. At the hearing of this voice, the people that stood by, said that it thundred, others said, that an Angel spake to him. This voice was an articulate found coming with the Thunder; and the Hebrew word which we commonly translate voyces, fignifieth thunder. The lewish Writers tell us that (Bath col) the daughter of voice (which they reckon the only way of divine revelation, left them after the Babylonish Captivity) was the will of God made known to them immediately from heaven by this fore of Thunder. Thunders and voyces are often joyned in the Book of the Revelations (Chap. 4. 5. chap. 8. 5.) implying, the revelation of those prophetick wonders, was made by Voyces accompanied with Thunder. And thus those two texts which seem contradictory may be reconciled, Alt. 9 7. it is faid, They who journied with Paul stood speechless hearing a voice. But (Ad. 22.9.) Paul faith, They law indeed the light and were afraid, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. The voice which they heard in the oth Chapter was the voice of Thunder, and the voice which they did not hear the 22d, was the diffinet articulate voice of Christ, laying, Saul, Saul, Why persecutest thou me?

From this confideration of Gods gradual speaking to us in the Clouds, we may be led to consider how gradually he speaks to us in the Ministry of his Word; there he speaks sometimes whisperingly, gently, he at first awakens the ear a little, but at last he roareth with his voice. If we will not hear, he hath louder and londer voices, which we shall hear whether we will or no. At the giving of the Law (Exod. 19. 19.) The voice of the trumpet

founded

sounded long, and waxed louder and louder. There are different degrees in the loudness of the voice when God speaks to his people. We should take warning by the light that shineth, we should hear the smallest voice, the first whisperings of God, and not put him to his roaring voice. God is said to roar out of Zion (foel 3. 16.) yea, many times he roareth upon Zion, because of the disobedience and negligence of the Citizens of Zion. After it a voice roareth, the words that follow speak the same thing,

He thundereth with the voice of his excellency.

This is the first time that we have the word Thunder express in 20 nuit intonsthe text, though the fense of the whole place speakes thunder. it, commotions The word which fignifieth Thunder, fignifieth any great noise or fuit practindigdreadful cry (Ezek, 27.35.) (Pfal. 96.11.) it fignifieth al- natione fo the voice of any one that complaineth or bemoaneth his or her Tonitru est fracondition, or that is troubled or fretted at the crossess of relati- gor editus em ons: It is said of Peninnah, she provoked her (that is, Hannah) rum ignium e fore (or, as the Margin reads it, angred her) for to make ker fret, nube erumpenbecause the Lord had shut up her womb: The word is that of the tium. Plin. text, to make her thunder, or to cause a tumultuation in her spirit, like that in the Clouds, when heat and cold contend for the maile- Tonitru eft ryes.

Thunder is so unquiet and tumultuous, that any thing which is nus in nube so, may by a figure be called Thunder. The text speaks of proper Spissa, qui on-Thunder; and if we enquire among Philosophers about the nature halatione cakeand generation of Thunder, some tell us briefly, Thunder is a crash- da & sicca, ing or cracking noise made by the stroke of enclosed fires breaking conclusionira through the Clouds. O: thus, Thunder is a dreadful found in a nubem, que thick Cloud, caused by the hot and dry exhalation shut up in the cum fremitu bowels of it, which seeking passage out makes its own way with tum, magna vimighty violence.

But though the matter here treated upon by Elihu be philosophi- de undique mical, yet I must remember that mine is a Divinity, not a Philotophy ben concusit. Lecture, and therefore it may fuffice me to touch these things, and Garcæ. Meteorolog. ex leave the Reader, who defires to know more of them, or of other Ariffot lib. 2. mysteries in Nature, to seek his fatisfaction in those learned Au- Meteor, c. 9. thers who professedly handle this subject of Thunder; and shall here only take notice that Eliku doth not only say, He thundereth, but He thandereth

horrendus fo. olentia erumpit

Nnn

With

Excellentia elatio, supernia werbum meditimejt.

With the voice of his excellency.

That's an explication of he reareth. The voice of his excellency, is his high voice. The word fignifieth pride, because they that are in high places are so apt to be proud, or because high-mindedness is the same with pride. Proud men think themselves higher than their brethren, as Saul was above the people by head and shoulders; therefore the same word fignifieth pride and light. The Lord thundereth with the voice of his highness or excellency of his

er coun ubpsas durs. In voce contutumeliæ suæ, Sept. Scotta explicant in voce-

The Septuagint faith, He thundereth mith the voice of his reproach, or with his reproaching voice. A manthat is angry poures. out his displeasure in reproaches upon such as have provoked him. God knowes how to Thunder just and deserved reproaches upon provoking finners. The Scoliasts explain that translation of the seventy, with the voice of his repreach, thus, with or by a voice minirum plens. fall of threatning; and 'tis a truth, the mouth of God is full of threatnings, and his heart of indignation, against presuming smuers. We may put all these together, yet I conceive our own reading most suitable; He thundereth with the voice of his excellency, like a great Commander in war, of whom God speaks (Joh 39. 25.) in that most high-strained, rhetorical description of the strength and courage of the horse; He smelleth the Battel afar off, the thunder of the Captain, and the Shontings. When an Army is engaged in Battel, there is not only a thundering of the Guns, but of the Captains and Commanders, they speak highly, they thunder with a voice of their high courage and excellency; much more doth God in the day of his Battel thunder with the voice of his excellency.

> Hence note; God works like himself, he makes his excellency and his highness appear to the children of men in the very works of

And doth he not often so it in his works of Providence, whether for the Salvation of his faithful people, or for the Destruction of his enemies? I shall not stay upon this point, having met with matter of the same purport more than once before. He thundereth with the voice of his excellency,

And!

And he will not flay them when his voyce is heard.

'Tis question'd, who are meant by them, He will not fray them; DPV calcane-Some understand the raine and showers, which usually sollow um tenuit. upon, or after a great thunder; and we commonly call them aliqui exponunt retardsthunder showers. Others understand the Lightning and the Thun-buntur imperder; as if he had faid, When Gods purpose is declared that there fonalitier, vel shall be lightning and thunder, he will not stay them, or take them retardabit aliby the heele, as the word properly fignifieth : whence Jacob had quisfulmen wil his name, because when Esan was coming into the world, Fasob fulgur cum detook him by the heele, as if he would have stayed or stopped his tit. Scult. birth, at least have got into the world before him; and therefore Neg; differt il-Esan said (Gen. 29. 36.) Is he net rightly called Jacob? for he la cum audienhath supplanted me these two times. Which some render accord- de est vox eing to the letter of the Text, My brother may well be called an i. e. fulgetra Heeler, for he hath heeled me thefe two times. In this sense the tonitruum pre-Lord will not flay the birth and breaking forth of these terrible nuncia embitivins, Thunder and Lightning. Lastly, learned Junius referrs be. usions them to the Lightnings only, rendring, He doth not defer them, i. e. premitwhen his voyce is to be heard; which he thus expounds, He fends iit. June lightning before, foretelling thunder will follow. But I conceive the former exposition more cleare, which refers this not staying, er he will not stay, both to thunder and lightning, in confort or together.

When once God speaks the word, and is resolved upon the doing of a thing, there is no stopping of him, nor will he stay his

He will not take thunder and lightning by the beele, when he hath bid them go. We have a parallel sense to this, concerning the thunder and lightning of divine Judgements (Zeph. 2. 1, 2.) Gather your selves together, Ogather your selves together, before the decree bring forth. As if he had faid, If once the decree bring forth, if once God declare that wrath shall come, there is no recalling of it, He will not fray it when his voyce is heard; for then (19a. 43.13.) The Lord with work, and none shall let him; he will not stop it himself, and none else can. Thunder and lightning mall come; who loever fland in their way must down. And as none Nnn 2

can lett God by power, so none shall lett him by prayer, if once he be refolved, and hath fent forth his decree; therefore do not provoke the Lord to give out the word, for then your case is desperate. There's no opposing the work of God, or God in his working. He will not ftay them when his voyce is heard.

Vers. S. God thundresh marveilously with his voyce; great things doth he that we cannot comprehend.

Consider how often this word is repeated, He row eth with his wice, He thundereth with the voice of his excellency, and here, He thu dereth marveiloufly. This may teach us, Flift, (which hath been noted before) that the works of God in nature are to be heeded. Secondly, that we are very backward to heed them. Thirdly, this is so often ascribed to God, least we should think that thunder is only a work of nature.

God thundereth marveiloufty.

Tonat mirabi-Mis. Hebr: Numerus pluralu indicat angentem adtalium ad vocem tonitruis. Rined.

The words may be read, God thundereth marvels; 'is in the plural number: We render well, God thundereth marveiloufly; but there is a greater Emphasis, taking it in the plural number, Gad thundereth marvels. Consider thunder and lightning in a mirationem & proper, or in a metaphorical sense, there are many marvels or wonders in them. Naturalists observe many marvels in natural thunder and lightnings; these sometimes melt the sword without hurt to the scabbard; dissolve the mettal, not consuming the purse; break the bones, and not the flesh; these spoyl the Wine without staving or breaking the cask; kill or stifle the child in the womb, and not the mother. God thunders marveiloufly in these things.

Again, how many marveilous Judgments hath God wrought by thunder! how often hath he destroyed the enemies of his pecple, and the blasphemers of his great Name, by thunder and lightning from Heaven! Anastatius the Emperour, an Eutichian persecutor of the Orthodox Christians, was slaine by thunder. The History of the Church, speaks of a Christian Legion or Brigade of Christians in the Army of Aurelius the Emperour, who earnestly prayed (the whole Army being in a great strait) that God would appear for their help, and the defeating of the enemy; whereupon the Lord sent raine for their reliefe, as also thunder and hightning, by which the enemy was discomfired and destroyed:

where-

whereupon that Legion was called, The thundering Legion. When Julian the Apostate, meetly to despite the prophetic of Christ (Mat. 24.) who had said of the Temple at Jerusalem, there should not be left one stone upon another; Julian, I say, in despite of this prophesie, yea, to despite it, gave command for the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, and upon his command there was a great quantity of materials brought together for that purpose; but the Lord seeing the pride of this enemy, sent a marveilous thunder, with an Earthquake, which not only amazed the workmen, but scattered those materials, & put a stop to the work.

Now as there are many marvels wrought by natural thunder and lightning, so also by that which is spiritual. Nor will it be unuseful for us to consider them upon occasion of what is said of na-

tural thunder in this Scripture.

God thundereth marveiloufly in the dispensation of his Word, or in his dealings with the souls of sinners, to bring them home to himself, and to turn them from their fins. We may (not excluding the proper sense) profitably expound the whole 29th Plalm in this spiritual sense; wherein the Lord under the Allegory of 2 terrible thunder-tempest, seems to give a prophetical description of his mighty power in propagating the Gospel to the ends of the earth; which goeth not out as an empty found beating the aire, but with wonderful efficacy, convincing the world of fin, and of their need of Christ to save them from their fins. And to shew that this is the scope of the Pfalm, David begins it with a strong exhortation, (v. 1, 2.) Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give ye unto the Lord glory and frength: Give unto the Lord the glory due: unto his Name; worship the Lord in the beauty of boliness. As if David had faid. O ye, the mighty Princes and Potentates of the world, who in most places and times have contemned God and his holy worship; and being your selves either irreligious, or engaged in a false religion, have used your power against, and hindered the progress of the Gospel, and the advancement of true religion; I advisor and admonish you to lay down that spirit, to embrace the Gospel, to love the power of godliness, to propagate the true knowledge of Tesus. Christ, and to encourage the faithfull dispencers and professors of it, both by your favour and example, worshiping the Lord in the beauty

If any should ask, Why is the Lord to be so worthipped? why

must he have such high honours from those that are high? what doth he in the World which calls for such adoration? David answers Meteorologically as well as Theologically, he answers from the Clouds (vers. 3.) The Voyce of the Lord is upon the Waters, the God of glory thundreth; the Lord is upon many Waters; The voyce of the Lord is powerful, the voyce of the Lord is full of Majesty. As if he had said, Although the Lord Jesus Christ will not fet up an outward, pompous, political Kingdome, such as that of Cyrus or Alexander, &c. yet by the Ministry of the Gospel he will erect a spiritual Kingdome, and gather to himself a Church, that shall abide for ever, out of all the Nations of the earth: For the Gospel shall be carryed and preached to, not only the people of Israel, the Jemes, but to the Gentiles all the world over, that the minds of men may be awakened, enlightned, and moved with that unheard of Doctrine of Salvation by Christ,

which had been hid from Ages and Generations.

And though many shall be hardned against, and oppose that glad-tydings, yet because the God of glory thundereth, that is, becanse the voyce of the Lord is powerful and full of Majesty; he accompanying the Ministry of the Gospel with power and terror like that of Thunder, home to the Consciences of men, for their conviction and conversion, therefore it shall do great and glorious things, subduing the greatest and sourcest sinners to the obedience of his Will. This Thunder will east down the strong holds of sin, and every thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, (2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.) This is it which the Prophet David in endeth (according to this allegorical interpretation) by the effects of Thunder, eleganily expressed (vers. 5, 6, 7, 8,9.) The Voyce of the Lord breaketh the Cedars, yea, the Lord breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon; that is, proud and high-minded men, who are (in their own conceit) as tall as Cedars, these he will make to fee that they are but shrubs, these he will humble and break heir hearts by true repentance, for the pride of their hearts, and all the abominations of their lives. Further (vers. 6.) He maketh them also to skip like a Calf, Lebanon and Syrion like a young Unicorn; that is, the Lord by his thundering powerful voyce, first, will make them skip as frighted with fear, and secondly, as revived with joy. Yet more (vers. 7.) The Voyce of the Lord dividerh

the Flames of fire; that is, will send and divide to every one as they need (1 Cor. 12. 11.) the holy Spirit, who is compared to and called Fire (Mat. 3. 11.) and who came as with a Thunder-storm of a mighty rushing wind, and with the appearance of sloven Tongues, like as of fire, and sate upon each one of the Apostles, (Acts 2.2,3.) Nor did this Voyce of Thunder, accompanied with divided flames of fire, reach ferufalem only; for, as it follows (verf. 8.) The Voyce of the Lord shaketh the Wilderness, the Wilderness of Kadesh; that is, the Lord by the voyce of the Gospel thall go forth with power to those Gentiles, who are like a wilderness, barren of goodness, and unmanur'd in spirituals, though they dwell in well-govern'd Cities, and are well-furnished with Morals. It shall go forth also to those Gentiles who inhabit wast wildernesses, and are not so much as reduced to civility: These wildernesses the thundering voice of the Lord hath shaken heretofore, and doth shake at this day, and will yet further shake, that the sulness of the Gentiles may come in. Many of these wildernesses hath the Lord turned into fruitful fields, and pleasant lands, by the voice of the Gospel sounding among them. For in these wildernesses (as it solloweth werf. 9.) The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve; that is, they that were as wild, as untaught and untamed as the hind or any beaft in the forrest, he brings to the forrows of their newbirth, to Repentance and Gospel-humiliation: And in doing this He (as the Pialmist goes on) discovereth the forrests, that is, opens the hearts of men, which are as thick fet and full grown with vanity, pride, hypocrifie, self-love, and self-sufficiency, as also with wantonness and sensuality, as any forest is over-grown with thickets of trees and bushes, which deny all passage through, till cleared away by cutting down or burning up; Such an opening, such a discovery doth the Lord make in the forrests of mens hearts, by the Sword and Fire, that is, by the Word and Spirit of the Gospel; and when all this is done, the forrest becomes a Temple, and as that verse concludes, In his temple dath every one speak of his glary. And if the floods of ungodliness rise up against this people, whom the thunder and lightning of the Gospel have subdued to Christ and framed into a holy Temple, then the Pialmist assureth us (verf. 10.) The Lord sitteth upon the flood, that is, 'tis under his power, he ruleth and over-rulethit: yea, The Lord fitteth King for ever, and (v. 11.) The Lord will give swength to his people, the Lord will

bless his people with peace. Thus the Lord thundereth marveileufly and these are glorious marvels which he thundereth; he converts sinners. The thunder of the Gospel frights them out of sin, and the grace of it gives them peace.

Thus, though I like not their way who are given to allegorize the Scriptures, yet, I doubt not but we may make a profitable use both of this and many other Scriptures by way of allegory. This being an undeniable truth, which is the ground of it, That the Lord puts forth, as it were, the power of Thunder and Lightning in the preaching of his Word, these two things are to be marked.

First, That Thunder and Lightning are a kind of Word of God to us, they tell us (though consusedly, yet plainly enough, for the conviction and condemnation of gainsayers) there is a God; the greatest Princes of the world have taken notice by Thunder and Tempest that there is a God over all, governing all; nor needs there any more teaching than that to condemne Athiests and Mockers at Religion. We say proverbially of some men, who make a rude noise, they are so loud that we cannot hear God Thunder for them; yet know there's no noise can so drown the voice of Gods Thunder in the Clouds, but it will condemn all that hear it

not, so as to acknowledg God in it.

Secondly, We should mark, that as Thunder and Lightning are a kind of Voice or Word of God to us, so the Word of God, or the Voice of God, speaking in his Word, is a kind of Thunder and Lightning to us, very mighty, very powerful, even clothed with an irrefistible power and might. And therefore if we take the Prophet David in 29th Psalm before mentioned, speaking, in the former part of it, of the effects of Natural Thunder only; yet toward the close of the Psalm, he applyeth it to the Word of God, while he faith (v. 9.) And in his Temple doth every one speak of his glory; that is, the Word and Ordinances of God, ministred in his Church, or Temple, will put every one to acknowledge and speak of the glorious Power of God, even much more than the mighty Thunder which soundeth in our eares, or the subtil Lightning which flasheth in our eyes. There is a far more royal power in the Thunder of the Word, than in the word of Thunder: This terrifyeth only to Conviction, but that terrifieth to Salvation; for after God speakes terror there in his Threatnings, he speaks comfort in the Promises; and when he hath affrighted us with a sense of our sins, and of his wrath due to us for our sins, as with an horrible tempest, he presently resreshect us with the gentle gales of revealed grace, and with the pleasant amiable Sun-shine of his savour by Jesus Christ. And therefore in respect both of the Natural and Spiritual Thunder, considered in the circumstances and consequences of it, Elihu might well conclude, as he doth, in the last words of this Verse and matter.

Great things doth he, which we cannot comprehend.

We may take these words, not only as intending the great things of the Thunder, which indeed are such as we cannot comprehend; but, as a transition from Thunder, to those other great things that God doth, set forth in the latter part of the Chapter.

Great things doth he.

God doth the least things, but he can do great things, he doth great things

Which we cannot comprehend.

The Hebrew is, He doth great things, and we know not; which Recit magna or may be expounded two wayes.

First, We know not, that is, we take no notice of them. God miss. Heb.

doth great things, and we are very backward to confider them.

Secondly, We know not, that is, he doth such great things, that let us consider and study them as long as we will, let us break our brains to find out the greatness of them, yet we shall never find it out; He doth great things that we cannot comprehend. The text is clear, and the sense profitable in either Interpretation; he doth great things which we do not consider, or he doth great things, that when we have considered them, and done the most we can, we cannot come to the sull knowledge of them. Naturalists speak much of the causes of these things, yet the clearest sighted among them, could not see the bottom of them, not reach the urmost reason of them. Great things doth he, which we cannot comprehend.

Hence note; It is both proper and easie to God to do great things.

He is the great God, so great that doing great, things is no wea-

riness to him. The text doth not say, he hath done great things, or he will do great things, but, he doth great things, he is alwayes doing great things; and that is a point improveable for the comfort of the people of God. When a great matter is to be done, we say, who shall do it? when we are in great troubles and dangers, we fay, who shall deliver us? If small matters be to be done, we think we or other men like our selves can do them; but when great matters are to be done, we hardly believe, that God-can do them for us; yet 'tis all one with God whether the thing be great or little that is to be done, if he please to undertake the doing of it. It is questioned (Amos 7.2.) By whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small? They looked to this and that creature, and saw faceb so fmall and low, that they thought he could never rife again; but remember facobs God is great, and he doth great things, this great thing especially, to raise them that are low and small. What-ever your condition is remember God is great, and can as well do great chings as little, as eafily make a world as give you a morfel of bread; there is nothing hard to God; He doth great things, and (according to the strictness of the Hebrew text) we know not, that is, we consider them not, we take little notice of them.

Hence observe;
The sons of men are commonly very slight thoughted about the great works of God.

When God thunders marvels, we know them not, we lay them not to heart. The Prophet (Ifa. 5. 12.) sheweth how busie the careless Jews were in their mirth and jollity, but they regarded not the work of the Lord, neither considered the operation of his hands. When God is doing great things, one man is getting wealth, another taking his pleasure, but they regard not at all, or have very little regard to what God is doing.

Again, from our reading, Great things doth he, which we cannot

comprehend,

God doth great things that are beyond the greatest of our apprehensions, such things, as after all our study we are short in, and short of.

As it is our fin that we take not paines enough to know the great

things that God doth; so God doth things so great, that when we have done our best, or, after all our paines, we cannot know them fully: though we know their outfide, yet little of their infide, though we know their effects, yet little of their causes and contrivances. To know a thing, is to know it in the causes of it, to see causas sire. the reason of it. A man knoweth not the things that he knows, till he feeth the reason of what he knows. How little doth man know of, or see into the reason of the great things that God doth? How little do we fee of the marvels that are in the works of God? The love of God passeth knowledge (Ephes. 3. 19.) Though we labour to know it (and tis our fin that we labour not more to know it) yet we cannot, it surpasseth all our knowledge. And as that love of God, which is the first mover of all the good and great things that he doth for his people, palfeth our knowledge, so the things that are the effects of that love to his people are so great, that they pass our knowledge. Hence we may infer these two duties.

First, Let us be much in the admiration of the great things that God doth. Where knowledge ends, there admiration should begin. It was a shame for a Philosopher to admire, because he was supposed to know the whole compass of nature; but it is no shame for a Christian to admire, there being many things, not only in the special dispensations of grace, but in the common dispensations of providence, which he cannot know comprehensively, the whole compass of which he cannot graspe or take in with

the best of his understanding.

Secondly, Let us take heed of censuring the works of God. Some are very bold in passing their Verdicts upon the great things that God doth; this, and that is not so well done, this and that might have been otherwise done. The great things which God doth please not many men if they hit not their interest, how apt are they to find fault; But seeing God doth great things that we cannot comprehend, let us take heed of censuring any of the great things that God doth; no man should judge or censure that which he doth, not, cannot know, and fully understand: But usually they who understand things least, censure them most, and they are most apt to judge, who have the weakest judgements.

J 0 B,

JOB, Chap. 37. Verf. 6, 7, 8.

6. For he faith to the snow, be thou on the earth : likewile to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength.

7. He sealeth up the hand of every man, that all

men may know his work.

8. Then the beafts go into dens, and remain in their places.

Lihuhaving set forth the wonders of divine power in Thun-der and Lightning, gives us other instances, to the same purpose, in this context.

First, In the Snow.

Secondly, in the Rain. And he describes the Snow and Rain

three wayes.

First, By poynting at their Author or producer, in the 6th verse [He] that is, God, of whom he spake in the close of the former werfe.

Secondly, He sheweth the way or manner of their production [he saith] 'tis done by a word, or command, that is, by a word of command; he faith to the Snow, he likewife faith to the freall Rain, and to the great Rain of his strength, be ye on the earth.

Thirdly, He discribes the effects, or consequences, at least, of

Snow and Rain; and those are of two forts.

First, What respects man, at the 7th verse, He fealeth up the hand of every man, that all men may know his week. There we have the first effect, the sealing of mans hand, together with the designe

or intent of God in it, that all men may know his work.

The second estect respects the beasts of the earth, at the 8th verse; then, that is, when God hath commanded the Snow and the Rain to be on the earth, then the beafts go into dens and remain in their places. Thus we may conceive the parts and general scope of these three verses.

Veri, 6. For, he faith to the Snow.

That causal particle [for] in the front of this verse, imports a reason, or an account given in these words, of what was said before at the 5th verse, God doth great things which we cannot comprehend; then presently solloweth, for he saith to the Snow, &c. As if Elihu had said, not only are Thunder and Lightning, but Snow and Rain to be numbed and reckoned among the great and marveilous works of God; for he saith to the Snow.

He faith;

That is, as hath been shewed already, he commandeth. What God sai h, shall be, must be, his words are laws, he saith to, or commandeth the Snow. Not only doth God give commands to rational creatures, nen & Angels, but to meer sensitive creatures, the beasts and to senseless creatures, to vegetives or plants, yea, to inanimates, to things without any life at all, such are Snow and Rain; yer, as if Snow and Rain had an ear to hear, & an understanding to mind a command from God, the text represents God speaking to these,

He faith to the Snow, &c.

The Snow falls in filver showres every year, and covers the face of the earth; All men behold it, but sew understand either what it is, or why it is sent. Take this brief description of it from the Schoole of Nature.

Schoole of Nature.

Schoole of Nature.

Snow is a moist vapour, drawn up from the earth, to, or neer, the humidus in memiddle region of the Air, where it is condensed or thickned into a diamaerureCloud, and falls down again like carded wool, sometimes in greater, gionem subvesometimes in lesser slakes.

Snow and Rain, are made of the same matter, and have their the condensative of the same place, only they differ in their outward form, two, installance as is obvious to the eye, and their season; Rain falleth in the war-carminate demer seasons, the Clouds being dissolved into Rain by heat, or when sendit per particle cold is more remiss; Snow salleth in the sharper seasons, tas, interdum the Cloud being thickned by the cold. Hence Solomons compatidum eniguas, son (Prov. 26.1.) As Snow in Summer, so honour is not comely for antequamin a sool. Snow is a goodly white robe upon the Winter-body of the guttar resolvatearth, or upon the body of the earth in Winter; yet how up tur. Garcæ. seemly is it upon the body of the earth in Summer, hiding and Meteor. c. 29. obscuring

obscuring, as well as hurting, that which is the natural beauty and ornament of it; Thus honour is a precious robe, yet no way fitting the back of a foolish or undeferving person. Snow is very improper and unnatural in Summer, because the coldness of it hinders the ripening of the corn, and other fruits of the earth: And therefore when Solomon faith (Chap. 25.13.) As the cold of snow in the time of Summer, fo is a faithful messenger to him that sendeth him. His meaning is not, that the falling of fnow is either comfortable or feafonable in the time of Summer, but that fnow gathered in Winter, and referved (as the custome is in hot countries) till Summer, being put into drink doth exceedingly cool it, and so refresh-

eth those who are ready to faint with heat.

But not to go further from the I ext in hand; we fee that Snow and Rain have the same original, both being formed out of vapours. As in mans body (who is a little world) from the Stomack there rise up vapours to the Head, which by the coldness of the brain are changed into, and sent back again in Rheumes and Catarrs: So vapours drawn up from the Earth into the Air, are sent back in Snow and Rain. Solomon describing the infirmities of old age, alludes to this, while he warnes the young man, that thus the Clouds will return after the Rain (Eccl. 12.2.) which may be understood either more generally of that succession of troubles to which old age is subject, or more particularly of Rheum and Flegm wherewith old age is molested; the defluxion of the Rheum being as the Rain, and the gathering of new matter, which continually distilleth from the Head upon the Lungs, being as the returning of the Clouds after the Rain. He saith to the Snow

Be thou on the earth.

The place where Snow is generated is in the Air, from thence it receives a command to dispatch it self to the Earth, and there to abide; He saith to the Snow, be thou on the Earth, that is, cover the face of the earth, be thou as a mantle upon the earth, or as a white sheet spread over the whole face of it, until I call or take and dissolve thee into water. The same command which is here thee off exprest concerning the Snow, is also sent forth to the Rain; He faith to the Snow be thou on the carth,

Likewife

Likewise to the small rain, &c.

That is, he faith to the small Rain, do thou descend upon the earth. By small Rain is meant any gentle Rain, softly and sweetly dropping and destilling out of the Clouds. Now as God orders this fmall Rain, so likewise, as it followerh,

The great Rain of his Grength.

The whole O iginal Text, which we render the [mall Rain and the great Rain of his strength, hath a great Elegancy in it, word for word thus, He faith to the showre of Rain, and to the showre of Rains Et imbri pluof his strength. The word Rain in both is the same, only the for- via Gimbri mer is in the singular, and the latter in the plural number, which pluviarum potentiæ ejes. hightens or encreaseth the sence, as Criticks and Grammarians Heb. tell us, and therefore we render small Rain and great Rain; to Imber eft agwhich Elibu gives this further addition in the close of the verse, mencalestium The great Rain

Of his strength.

Of whose strength ? surely of the strength of God; as if God becominum. did in some Rain put forth his mighty strength, and make bare his eigenitivmille own Arm in the showrs which he sends upon the earth. The great Pluralis vehe-Rain of his strength is that violent Rain which comes forth from procellosum God and thews forth to us the great strength of God: For neither imbrem signifiof those two Epithetes small and great are expresly in the Text, yet cat. Merc. both the scope and Grammatical construction of the words justifie Cum duo nomithat Translation, A showre of Rain in the singular number imply- a copulantur iden fere signiing a mild gentle Rain, or, as we call it, a small Rain; and a showre ficantia quorum of Rains in the plural number implying a continued, vehement, posterim ponifierce Rain, or as we call it, a great Rain, especially having that tur loce adjectiremarkable adjunct following, of his strength. When the Lord vi alterum depromised to give somes of Rain for the asking (Zach. 10. 1.) he fuerit plinameant a plentiful strong Rain; by which also he intended to sig- lu numeri erit nifie the abundance of spiritual gifts and graces, which he would superlative pour down upon the Church. So much for the opening of this significationis, pour down upon the Church. So much for the opening of this Bold. werse, For he saith to the Snow, be thou on the Earth, likewise to the Bold. Imber pluviasmall Rain, and to the great Rain of his strength.

First, From the causal particle, for, which referreth to the for- multis pluvis mer words, God doth marveilous things which we cannot compre- confins. Deuf. hend.

aquarum ଙ pluviarum. Nonius. Coacervatio rum, quafi ex bend, for, he faith to the Snow, and to the small Rain, &c.

Observe; The Snow and Rain are to be written in the Catalogue of Gods wonderful works.

What more common than Snow and Rain? and yet, as common as they are, they have wonders in them. Some of the Ancients have observed many VV onders in the Snow, such as these

First, That being in its own nature so extreamly cold, yet it is formed in that part of the Air which is comparatively near the earth, and so hath more heat in it.

Secondly, That Snow being so exceeding cold, doth yet by Gods Command fall in some very hot Countries, even in the hot-rest of Sommer. Geographers tell us of Snow in many places of Tartary, which are extreamly hot.

Thirdly, they give this as a VV onder, That whereas it never Snows at all upon the Main Ocean, yet there is an Island spoken of by Pliny, called (Nivaria from Nix) the Snow Isle, which, though compassed with the Sea, is alwayes covered with Snow.

Fourthly, this is given as a Wonder, That Snow being so apt to melt by hear, yet Mount Ætna, which is full of Sulphur, and casts out slames of fire continually, hath the Head of it hidden continually under or covered with a Cap of Snow.

Fifthly, That in some places V Vorms are bred and live in the

Snow of a fiery colour.

Sixthly, That the Snow, though it be very cold and chilling, hath in it a fecundating or fatning power, as to the earth, is also wonderful. Snow is a great cherisher and nourisher of Plants and Trees, of Corn and Grass; and therefore David saith (Pfal. 147, 15, 16.) He giveth Snow like Wool, and heavy Frost like ashes. There are three things considerable in Snow, for which it is compared to VVool. First, for the whiteness of it. Snow is white as VVool; Snow is so exceeding white, that the whiteness of a Soul cleaned by pardoning Grace, in the blood of Christ, is likened to it (Isa. 1.18.) and the latter part of the same verse intimates, that the whiteness of Snow bears resemblance to that of VVool. The whiteness of Snow is caused by the abundance of Air.

Plin. lib. 6. cap. 32. Nat. Histor.

Air and spirits that are in that pelluvid Body, as the Naturalists Causaalbeding speak: Any thing that is of a watery substance being frozen or est Spiritus acmuch wrought upon by cold, appears more white. And hence it is rifque copiu in that all persons inhabiting cold Climates or Countries, are of a corpore diapha-no. Arist. lib. whiter complexion than they who inhabite hot. 2. de Mundo.

Secondly, Snow is like Wool for foftness, 'tis as plyable to the

hand, as a Lock or Fleece of Wool.

Thirdly, Snow is like Wool (which may seem strange) with respect to the warmness of it. Though Snow be cold in it felf, as I said before, yet it is to the earth as Wool, or as a woolen cloth or blanker, that keeps the body warm. Snow is not warm formally, yet it is warm effectively and vertually, and therefore is it compared to Wool; and for that respect also the hoary Frost is said to be like ashes, in the same place of the Psalm: Athes are warm, Vrais frigm. Frost is cold, yet that is a known expression, burning cold, that is, Prunsm dici there is an effect in Frost, in the hoary Frost, of heat; things are volunt Gramkept warm by that which is contrary to warmth, Froft and Snow. marici quofi u-Naturalists have beat their Brains, but can assign no satisfying rea- rinam, quod ufon of these things, and therefore we must ascribe them especially rat arbores to to the power and wisdome of God. These particulars laid together flores. are a sufficient witness, that even Snow and Rain are to be reckoned with, and numbred among the wonderful works of God.

Hence Note, Secondly; God can do what he will by a word speaking.

And as himself can do what he will by his word, so he can make the creature do what he will by his word. This goodly Fabrick of the World was made by his word, and all the creatures in the world will prefently act upon a word from God (Pfal. 33.9.) He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast; Gods faying is doing. This is a point of high consolation to all the people of God; what-ever their affliction is, God can command them out of it; what-ever their wants are, God can command a Supply for them. He that faith to the natural Snow and to the Rain, to Stormes and Tempests, be ye upon the earth, can also fay to the Snow and Rain, to the Stormes and Tempelts of trouble, be ye not upon the earth; He can do or undo, by his word, as himself pleaseth. Tis also matter of great terror to all that rise up against, and disobey the word of the great God; for though they Ppp be

they fee nothing at hand to interrupt them, nothing to check them in the way of their lufts, though they look upon themselves beyond the reach of danger, yet 'ris but a word speaking from God, and they are wrapt up in Snow, and hurrican'd with a Storm and Tempelt; He faith to the Snow, &c. This irrefillble force of a word from God, was noted also upon those words in the 9th Chapter (vers. 7.) He commandeth the Sun and it rifeth not. The Sun will not appear, or it will hide it felf in an Eclipse, or Cloud, and darken the whole earth, if God do burgive a command.

Thirdly, take the point yet more strictly and restrainedly, as

here in the text, He faith to the Snow and to the Rain.

Snow and Rain are at the command of God.

Montilivideantur casibus. motu suo de-Serviunt. Quo pluviam sive nivem, five grandinem poreat. August. in Pfal. 148.

(Pfal. 147. 15, 16.) He sende h forth his commandment upmoveriquiver on earth, his word runneth very swiftly; that word referrs to the bo Dei in omni particular matter in hand, as appeareth in the very next Verse, and the two which follow; He giveth Snow like wool, he scattervult Deus illuc eth the hoar Frost like askes, he casteth forth his Ise like morfels, &c. ferturnubes free David applies the swift running of Gods word to these things; and how swiftly these run on his errands we may see (1 Kings 18. 44.) For whereas there had been no rain for three years & a half, according to the word of Elijah the Propher, God did but say to the Rain, come, and it came; and though Elijahi Servant, at first, faw a very small appearance of it, only a Cloud like a mans hand, yet prefently the whole heavens were masked over with Clouds, and there was a mighty rain, The great rain of his strength. Rain, and Snow, and Vapours quickly fulfil his word (Pial. 148.8.) God is the Lord of hosts, and these creatures are his host, these as well as men and arg Is are his hofts (Pfal. 24. 10.) Who is this king of elory 2 the Lord of hoffs is the king of glory; and 'cis the great glory of God, that he hath such hosts at his command : None of the Princes or Powers of this world have any fuch; How long may they fend their commands to the Snow before it will come, or to the Rain before they can get a drop of it! neither the one nor the other will flir at the command of man, but at the command of God they halte away.

And if when the Lord faith to the Snow and to the Rain, come, and they come, abide upon the earth, and they abide there, how will this reprove, and condemn thousands of the children of men, men, to whom the Lord speaks and speaks again and again, he sends out his commandment, and his word runs very swiftly to them, yet they stir not, they move not! Surely Snow and Rain will rise up in judgement against these, to whom the Lord hath said, do this, and they did it not, to whom the Lord hath said, do not this, yet they did it. The word represents all sorts of Creatures below man, as well as the Angels above man, readily obeying the command of God, to teach man how readily he should obey his commands, and how greatly he shall be condemned if he do not, and that not only by the Angels in heaven, but by the Snow and Rain that fall upon the earth.

Fourthly, From the destinction which is here made of the rain,

the small rain, and the greatrain of his strength,

Note;

Chap. 37.

In what degree or quantity soever the rain falls, it is by the special appointment of God.

If it be a small, gentle, soaking rain, it is because God hath spoken to the small rain to go; if it be a great, a violent, a smoaking rain, a rain of his Arength, it is because God hath said to the great rain, go: We are not to flick in second causes, but to have our hearts raised higher, both as to the rain it self, and to the proportions of it. He maketh small the drops of rain, as 'tis said at the 27th Verse of the former Chapter, and he can make great the drops of rain, or the drops of rain great; he can cast the rain into what mold he pleafeth, great or small; it shall be a sweetlydistilling rain, or it shall be, as Solomon speakes, a fiercely sweeping rain (Prov. 28. 3.) where he compares the poor man that oporesseth, to a sweeping rain. God hath sweeping rains, and as 'is said (Ezek. 13.13.) overflowing showres in his hand; and he sometimes sends, not a watering showre, not a refreshing or comforting showre in mercy, not a showre to enrich and fatten the earth, but an overflowing showre to drown the earth and destroy the fruits of it in his anger; and this is true, whether you take the showre properly, or meraphorically. If you take the showre properly for that which falls from heaven, he sends the refreshing, & he sends the overflowing showre; or if you take it mecaphorically (a showre may signific any kind or degree of judgement) he can send one judgement which shall be as small rain.

2

and he can send another which shall be as great rain, as the rain of his strength, an overslowing showre: He can send forth (as that allusion is used, Fer. 12.5.) his footmen, and he can send forth his horsemen, greater or lesser Judgments, as himself pleaseth; he proportions and cuts them out according to his own infinite wildome and righteous will.

Lastly, From these words, He faith to the snow, abide on the earth, or be thou on the earth, stay there, and so to the rain,

Observe ;

Snow or Rain continue or stay upon the face of the earth till God calls them off.

When he saith, be ye upon the earth, upon the earth they will be, until the same power that sent them, fetch them back again. These hosts are like a well ordered and well disciplined army, wherein Souldiers sent out by the order of their General or superiour Officers, must stay at their post where they are appointed, they must abide, till called off, upon pain of death: Be thou there, saith the Commander to his Souldier, be thou there till I fetch thee off; and when, after signal given, the battel begins, the Souldier never leaves charging or pursuing the enemy, till the trumpet sound a retreat. So its in this case, God saith to the Rain, be upon the earth till thou hast wrought my purpose and done all my pleasure, and there it is.

Thus we see the efficacy of Gods command upon these Me'eors, the Snow and the Rain; now follow the effects, or what

comes of ir.

First, we have that effect which respects man;

Vers. 7. He sealeth up the hand of every man.

He, Thatis, God,

Sealeth up the hand;

Sealing, in Scripture, hath a threefold fignification.

First, It notes the hiding of a thing, or the keeping of it secret profrieclaude and close; that which is sealed, is also concealed (1/a.8.16.) Bind up the Testimony, seal the Law among my disciples. There is a time wherein God commands the Law to be sealed, and the Testimony to be bound up, and that is a very sad time; for though there are

various

various apprehentions about the meaning of this command given the Prophet, yet the most probable intendment of it is, that God would not have him lose any more time in dealing with those faithless and profane scoffers of his message, but reserve those sacred mysteries, as secrees, to be communicated only to the faithful, who would with due reverence and faith religiously receive them. Seal the Law among, or for my disciples, that is, such as defire to learn, or have been taught and learned of me, and by learning are become spiritually skilful and learned, as the word is rendred (1/a.50.4.) Woe to finners when the Testimony is bound and the Law sealed; which is the import (I conceive) of that place in the same Prophet (1sa. 29. 11.) And when in the Revelation (Chap. 4. 1.) a Book sealed with seven seals was shewed to John, he wept (vers. 4.) because no man was found worthy to open, and to read the Book, &c. implying, that the Book was full of divine secrets, hidden from the eyes or understandings of men, and so must have continued, if the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ, had not prevailed are hidden things. Is not this (faid the Lord, Deut. 32. 34.) laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures ? That is, is it not kept close and hidden there? are not their cursed treafures of fin laid up among my righteous treasures of wrath? The Church (Cant. 4. 12.) is called, a Fountain fealed, because the waters by which the is refreshed and made fruitful are a hidden thing to the world, or because the Church must keep her self apart and distinct from the prophane and unbelieving world. That's one thing, we feal what we would hide or keep close.

Secondly, the word importeth sometimes, to finish or complete a thing. When a Writing is perfected then we seal it, when a Letter is made up we seal it; to that purpose the word is used: (Dan. 9.24.) Where the Prophet speaking of Christs coming in the sleth, and what he should then do, saith, He shall swish transgression, that is, he shall compleat, by the sacrifice of himself, all the sacrifices for transgression. Christ had no hand in any transgression, as to the doing of it, but in this sence he similhed all transgression; that is, he sinished the sacrifices of atonement for transgression, that so our transgressions might not be charged upon us. Further, that word, as there used, may very well bear the first

fence-

sence of sealing; He shall seal transgression, that is, he shall cover or hide our transgressions, for that is the effect of the Mediator-Thip of Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, To feal a thing is (in common sence) to confirm it (Fer. 32. 10, 11.) I (laid the Prophet) subscribed the Evidence and sealed it; that is, I confirmed it and made it good in Law. Now when 'tis faid here, He fealeth up the hand ef every man, I conceive we are to take it in the first sence, that is, he hiderh or thuts up every mans hand. The hand is the chief instrument of working, and therefore to fay, God thurs up or feals the hand, is an elegant Metaphor, fignifying that God puts a stop or stay to, or that he takes men off from their work. If a mans hands be

bound or sealed up he cannot use them.

But how doth God feal up the hand of every man, of every working man or labourer? By the Snow and by the Rain, faith Elihu; because when God sends abundance of Snow upon the earth, or when he fends the great Rain of his strength, men cannot work; in a deep fnow, or in a great rain, without doors, Labourmines cogat de- ers are hindered from their labour : And hence anciently, Winter had this title given it, dull or fluggish Winter; because in the extreamity of winter weather, many men are forced to fit (as we fay) with their hands in their pockets, or folded under their armes. He sealethup the hand of every man, that is, by tempestuous and fowl weather, he bindes their hands and present them together as with a Seal.

In manu omnes homines obsignabit. Mont.

Hiems iners di-

citar quod bo-

sidere inertes de complication

manibus.

The Hebrew is, In the hand he will feal, or, fealeth every man. From which strict reading, some have made a very impious interpretation of this Text, thereupon grounding that (as most use it) most unwarrantable Art of Chiromancy, as if God did put certain Lines, Prints, or Seals upon the hand of every man, from whence it may be collected and concluded, what (as some call it) his Fortune or Deffiny will be in the world. Which, as it is an opinion wicked in it felf, to altogether hetrogeneal to this place, the tendency whereof is not to thew how things thall work with men hereafter, but how they are often hindered or Aopt in, or from their present work.

There is yet another reading of the place, thus, He fealeth up every man with frength. The word which we translate hand, they translate frongth, and refer it to God; he with strength, or by

Vehomentia omnem hominem recludit. Merc. pagn.

his mighty power shuts up every man. The word hand may be rendred strength, because by the hand men act violently and put forth their strength. And God may be said to shew his strength in to soft and shuid a thing as snow and rain, that thereby he may give proof, now easily, or with how small a matter, in appearance, he can stop any man from his work and purpose. There is a truth in this leading, but I rather take the words as they stand in our translation, net as noting the hand or power of God sealing men, but Gods sealing the hands of men, putting them off from or besides their labour. Thus by Snow and Rain he seateth or shutteth up the hand of every man; and why so? the reason is given in the next words,

That all men might know his work.

God by extraordinary Snowes and Raines stops men from their work. But what, Is it that they should be idle? No, but that

they may know his work. Whose work?

Some understand it of mans own work; As if the meaning were this; God stops men a while from surther or present work, that they may take a view of their past works; or he takes them off from their civil works and employments, that they may employ themselves in considering their moral works; as the Prophet admonished the Jews (Isa. 1.5.) Now therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your wayes. Another Prophet reproved them for the neglect of this duty (Fer. 8.6.) No man saith, what have I done? The Lord often brings his people to hard sufferings that they may know their own doings or works. This is a prostable sense; yet I rather conceive that the work here intended is Gods work, and so I shall prosecute the words, That all men may know his work.

This wo k of God may be taken two wayes.

First, More strictly; thus God by rain shuts up the hands of men from their work, that they may know, those extraordinary stormes of Snow and Rain, which drive them in from their labour, and shut up their hands from working, are his special work. Great Snowes & Raines declare to all men the great power of God, who doth not only assonish men by terrible thunder and lightning, but can by Snow and Rain (his much weaker weapons) put them beside their purpose, and stop their work.

Secondly,

Secondly, Take his work more largly; Ged sealeth up the hands of men, that they having a vacancy from their own work may confider his; he doth as it were force them from what they were doing or intended to do, that so they may have leisure to take notice of what he hath done, That all men may know his work.

> Hence note, First; God can hinder or stop any man or all men in their work.

He, when, and as he pleaseth, can seal up the hand of every man. If God hath a mind to work, none can lett him (Ifa. 43.13.) Who can feal the hand of God? I may fay also, whose hand cannot God feal? How eafily did the Lord feal up the hand of the the builders of Babel (Gen. 11.7.) They were hot upon a mighty work; but God by confounding their tongues, sealed their hands, and they (as'tis faid, v. 8.) Left off to build the City.

Secondly, When the text saith, God sealeth up the hand of every

man, that all men may know his work,

Observe: How diligent foever men are about their own works, yet they are flow enough, too too flow to take notice of the work; of God.

When the hand of God is lifted up some will not see it, they are not only backward to see it, but opposite to the seeing of it; and though others do not fet themselves against, yet they do not fer themselves to the knowledge of his works. 'Tis a great and common fin, our not studying to know the works of God; we should fludy the works of God as much as we do the word of God; we should study both his work of Creation, and his works of Providence, whether works of Mercy, or of Judgment; we should endeavour to know all his works.)

From the universality of the expression, that all mon may know

his work,

God would have all findy this Book, the book of his works.

They whose bufiness and labours lie in fields, the Plow-men and the Vine-dreffers, he would have them know his works, as those special works of his, the Snow and the Rain, so his works in general. The meanest of men cannot excuse their ignorance of the works of God, seing the Text and Point tell us, God drives them many times out of the field, home to their houses, and will not let them do a stroak of work more abroad, on purpose that they might know his work.

Hence note, Thirdly;
The aim and intendment of God in keeping us at any time from our work, is that we may know more of his works.

At is a great part of our wildom to answer the designes of God in all his providences to us. We feldom think what God intends by a wet day, by a rainy day, by a tempestuous day, we little think the aim of God in calling us from our works, is to call us to the confideration of his work. Some men would never find a time to bestow their thoughts upon the works of God, if God did not take them off from their own work; they would never be at leifure, if he did not give them a leifure, a vacation time, and as here in this text, feal up their hand. God hath various wayes to take men off from the hottest pursuits of their own works; he takes many off from them by fickness, he binds them as prisoners to their beds; others are taken off from their own business by proper imprisonment, and restraint of liberty; and why? what is the reason of this? is it not that they may know his work, that they may well consider the dealings of God with them ? A fick bed is a School, and so is a Prison, where we should study both the Word and Works of God. Let us remember, when ever God takes us off from our Callings by fickness, or restraineth our liberty by imprisonment, his gracious purpose is, that we may know his work. Possibly when we had liberty to go about our own work, we could find little, or would not find much leifure to meditate upon the works of God. Well, faith God, I see I must take you off from your works, else you will never be Students in mine. That's the effect of Snow and Rain, with reference to man, He sealeth up the hand of every man, that all men may know his work.

But here we have another effect, with respect to beafts.

Vers. 8. Then the beafts go into dens, and remain in their

Polius fera quam bestia, a vivacitate, nam eidem vox vitam significat. Druf.

There are two words in the Hebrew which fignifie bruits, or beafts. The word here used properly fignifies wild beafts, the other rame bealts, such as are for our ule, and brought up to our hand. The text intends the wild beafts, the beafts of the forrest, the beafts of prey, they go into dens, these seek shelter in snow time, or when the great rain of the Arength of God falleth upon the earth. The Pialmist (Pfal. 104. 20.) describes the beasts ordinarily going out of their dens when the night comes; Then (saithine) all the beasts of the forrest go forth. Here we have the beafts, whether night or day, driven to their dens by a storm. or by the Snow; then they go to their dens and places of shelter. or, as we speak, to Covert. The word rendred Dens, fignifies a place of ambulh, or of lying in wait; such are the dens of wild beafts; as it is faid of the wicked (Pfal. 10.9.) He lieth in wait fecretly, as a Ereb, a verbo Lion in his den, to catch the poor, &c. It is this word. Such kind Arab, insidia- of recreats have the wild beasts, they have their dens, which are ri. Et ingreditur al o places to watch for their prey: And as they often go to their bestia in institute dens upon choice, or of their own accord, so they are sometimes ribula undein- driven to them (as in the text) for helter against a storm. Then sidiatur. Merc. the beasts go into dens,

And remain in their places.

They not only go into dens, but there they remain, they keep home, the form keps them in. As when the flood of waters, the greatrain of Gods Arength, was upon the earth, Noah was thut into the Ark, and there he remained (Gen. 7.) he did not only go in, but stayed in till the flood was asswaged; so it is said here of the beafts, they remain in their places, they will not budge nor peep out till the florm be over.

> Hence note, First: The Providences of God in various seasons, affect the very beafts of the earth.

Those creatures which live only a life of sense, yet partake fomewhat of reason, at least, they act according to reason; they are sensible of what God doth, though they know not that he doth

it. And is not this a great reproof to those, who are not only not sensible of, but slight those severer dispensations of God? how beast like are those men, who have not so much sence of the dealings of Cod as the beasts have! who though they have a knowledge beyond bruits, yet they use their knowledge no better, no not so well as bruits; and so they are either (as the Prophet saith) bruitish in their knowledge, or as the Apostle Peter (2 Pet. 2.12.) They are as bruit beasts (in humane shape) made to be taken and destroyed. How can they avoid being taken and destroyed by the judgments of God, or as Elihu expressent it, by the great rain of his strength, who take not so much notice of them, as to see their danger and get into a hiding place? For,

Secondly, When the beafts go into dens and remain in their places, what is it that moves them to it? Surely 'tis to be (as

we fay) out of harms way.

Hence note; Every creature by the light of nature would get out of danger.

Great snowes and rains of strength are dangerous or g ievous to beasts, therefore they avoid them; they will not stand in the open air while a florm lasts, if they can help it. Beasts will save themselves as well as they can; and if so, then take these two Inferences from it.

First, For our instruction. We are sent to school by God himself more than once to the beasts and creeping things of the earth. Solomon fends us to the Ant, a creeping thing, he bids us consider her wayes, and be mife. Elibu, in this text, fends us to the wild beafts of the earth, to Lions and Bares, to Tigers and Wolves, and bids us consider their wayes and be wise. Here is matter of instruction for us; What is that? Get out of harmes way, make halte out of danger; when the cold Snow comes, and the great Rain of the Arength of God, take heed you be not found abroad without a a shelter. Surely God who hath provided dens for the beasts, and places for those wilde creatures to hide themselves in, hath not left us without a niding-place, when the great rains of trouble fall, or threaten to fall. God invited his people of old, where to look for and whither to go for shelter in such a rainy day (Isa. 26. 20.) Come my people, enter thou into thy Chambers, and shut thy door a-Qqq2

bout thee; hide thy self as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over-past. For, Behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to purish the Inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity. As if he had faid, Hide your felves till the form be over, till the great rain of my firength be gone. God, who hath put an instinct into the creatures to go to their dens, to their places in a flormy feafon, doth specially call to men, and among men, specially to his own people, when is a time of indignation, to go into their Chambers and hide themselves till it be overblown. Do not stand out in the rain, donot stand in the storm, get into your chambers; what are these Chambers ? furely not the chambers of our houses, they are poor refuges, the rain of his strength will break or foak into those chambers, how well soever roofed or ceiled. The chambers in which the people of God are called to hide themselves, are God himself; the Power of God, the Faithfulness of God, the Truth of God, the Goodness of God, in these Chambers he calls his people to hide themselves, Solomon affureth us (Prov. 81.10.) The Name of the Lord is a frong tower, the right eous runneth into it and is safe. As God hath taught the beasts to run into their dens, so he instructs us in his Word to run into his Name, as to a strong tower. where we may be fafe. David faid (Pfal. 57. 1.) Under the shadow of thy Wings shall be my refuge until this calamity be overpaft; That is, I will put my felf under thy protection, while the flormy showers last. The Hen gathereth her young ones under her wings; so would Christ the Jewish Nation, both for comfort and fafety, and they refused him; What followed? The next verse tells us, Desolation. What could save them when the Roman Eagle spread her wings against them, who would not come under the wing of Jesus Christ! (Matth. 23. 37.) Tis not any worldly refuge, not any arm of flesh, but the shadow of the Lords wings that can hide us in an evil day from the evil of the day. They who get and keep close to God by Faith, need not fear the world flormes which this world can raite against them.

And hence, let sinners in general take warning; suppose you should live all your dayes in this world without a storm, I mean, without any outward trouble, yet remember, there will be a stormy day, the day of the great rain of the streng h of God will some, he will rain down vengeance upon all the ungodly in that day; Upon the micked he shell rain snares, fire and brimstone, and

an horrible tempest in that day (Psal. 11.6.) Therefore see that you have a resuge against that day, when many shall (as it is said, Rev. 6.) Call to the rocks, hide us, and to the mountains, fall upon us, cover us from the presence of him that sits on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. Although we should have prosperity or sair weather as long as we live in this world, yet there is a day of wrath coming; be not then to seek of a hiding place, which is only to be had in and by Jesus Christ; He is the man chiefly intended by the Prophet (Isa. 32.2.) That shall be a hiding place from the wind, and a sovert from the tempest. If you are without him in that day, you stand naked to the wrath of God, and that will quickly took into you, or sink you for ever.

Chap. 37.

Secondly, As the beafts going to their dens for shelter, may infituate us, so it may reprove and upbraid us, and it will be at last a dreadful reproof, upon all that are backward in this thing, to provide themselves of a Covert against the Storm. The Jewes (as hath been formerly toucht) were upbraided with the Crane, the Turtle, and the Swallow, because they knew the time of their coming (Jer. 8.7.) They knew when such a Countrey would be unsit, or unsafe for their stay, and therefore they removed to places more comfortable to, and commodious for them: But (saith he) my people know not the judgement of the Lord. As is the had said, my people have not so much wit or fore-cast as the Crane, and the Swallow, they know not what is good and safe, much less, what is best and safest for themselves; let it snow and rain never so saft, either they stand it out and out-dare it, or they seek such coverts from it, as cannot be a covering to them.

Tisfaid, the very Vermine, Mice and Rats, will (by a natural prefage.) come out of a house that is ready to fall. They are more senseless than Mice or Rats, who hasten not to a place of safety, when they perceive the foundation of that sinful State; wherein they stand, sinking, and the walls cracking on every hand. How faithless then are they, how presumptuous and senseless who hasten not out of Babylon, when they hear the Scriptures of truth saying not only that Babylon shall fall, or is falling, but, as of a thing already done and past, Babylon is fallen, is fallen! Is it not dangerous to stay in a falling house, in a house which shall so certainly fall, that its said, and said again, its fallen, its fallen. Otake heed of a hard heart when you hear of a falling house, or of a storm ready

to fall upon your heads. When God threatned Pharaoh to bring a ftorm of hail upon the land of Egypt (that was indeed a rain of his strength) a mighty rain of hail, the text saith (Exod. 9. 20.) He that feared the word of the Lord among st the servants of Pharaph, made his servants and his cattel flee into the houses; but they whose hearts were hardned, let them stay abroad, and so they perished. Sinners, you hear of a worse storm of hail threatned than that which fell upon Egypt, even the great rain of the strength of the Lords wrath, revealed from heaven against you; shall the beafts in fuch a day of diffress go into dens, and remain in their places, and do you think to abide the day of the Lords terrible coming? Do you think to stand it out when he appeareth? The Prophet foreshewing the day of Christs first coming in frail flesh, said (Mal. 3. 2.) Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appearesh? for he is like a refiners fire, and like fullers lope. Now if the day of Christs first coming was such as finners could not abide, when he came only with refining fire to fetch out the dross of their sins, and purge away their corruptions, shall sinners (impenitent and unbelieving sinners I mean) prefume that they shall be able to abide or endure that day of his second coming, when he shall come with consuming fire to punish and take vengeance on them for their fins! Away with these vain confidences, which (as the Prophet told the Jewes, Fer. 2. 37.) the Lord will certainly reject, and in which you can never profper, and go into those holes of the rock, the wounds of a crucified Saviour, in which, and in which only, you may be fafe and faved for ever, from the Snow and great Rain of Gods strength, the power of his anger, which none know at present (Pfal. 90. 11.) but all must feel, who are not sheltred from it by Fefas Christ, who delivereth as from the wrath to come (I Thef. I. faiety, when they pe ceive the foundation of that initial wherein bet fixed, indensy and the walk cracking onever y

fell, that 'its 'aid, and faid again, 'tis fallen,' in fellen. Otake heed

How fai his is then a chey, how prefunition is and to delets who ted some our of Maletter, when they have the Scrip was of the high guide a to say offer the Healt while the fact of a fact of

rous roadsy in a falling boufe, in a house which that to certainly

IOB, Chap. 37. Vers. 9, 10, 11.

9. Out of the South cometh the Whirlwind, and cold out of the North.

10. By the breath of God Frost is given; and the breadth of the Waters is straitned.

II. Also by watering he wearieth the thick Cloud: he scattereth his bright Cloud.

E Libn having spoken of Thunder and Lightning, as also of Snow and Rain, with their effects upon man and beast, at the 6th, 7th and 8th verses last opened, he in the 9th and 1 oth verses speaks of the Winds, with their effects; first, Cold; Secondly, Frost: or, first, of the VVind; fecondly, of the Cold; and thirdly, of the Frost; and then at the 11th verse, of the wonderful works of God in disposing and dispersing the water in the Clouds, for the

refreshing of the earth by Rain in its season.

In the 9th and 10th verses (Isay) he discourseth of the Winds; and though there be four Cardinal or principal VV inds, the East, VVest, North and South, which are subdivided into thirty-two VVinds according to the Mariners Compais, yet here Elibu treats by name of two VV inds only, the South-VV ind, and the North-VVind; which two are often and eminently spoken of in Scripture; which two, as they come from directly contrary Points in the Heavens, so they produce contrary effects, samously known among men, on earth. And therefore, I conceive, Elihu gives inflance-only about them, as being more generally taken notice of.

Verf. 9. Out of the South cometh the Whirlaind, &c.

The word which we render the South, properly fignifieth a Chamber, an inner Room, or secret place, a Chamber within a Cubiculum in-Chamber, which is the most private, retiring Room or Chamber. terius, penetra-Gen. 43. 30. Judg. 16. 9. 2 Sam. 13. 10. 1 Kings 20. 30. le; orme quod: Cant. 3. 4. VVe say, Out of the South, &c. And the Reason in iminis page. why the South is expressed by that word which signifieth a secret tibus est. Chamber, is, because the South Pole is scituate or placed in the

most

nobis, utpote depressus sub noftro Horizonte, secundum tem elevatur. Aquin. ch tausian EMED X OU TOL odoras. Epromptuariis the Whirl wind. *superveniunt* dolores. Sept.

Polus Antariti. mol fecret part of the VVorld, as to them who inhabit Northern cus occulistur a Climates; they who live nearest the North Pole, are farthest removed from the South. And as the same word in the Hebrew Tongue fignifieth the South and an inner Chamber, so at the oth Chapter of this Book (vers. 9.) we read of the Chambers of the guminatem qua South. The Septuagint render, He bringeth the Wind, or Whirl-Polus Artions, wind, out of his Cellar. Cellars or Store-houles being fecret places, Super Horizon- and removed out of fight, for the keeping of Goods and VV ares that are laid up there; and it is elegantly expressed, that V Vinds come out of Store-houses, as if God did lay them up, till he hath occasion to draw them forth, and use them.

Some render it by a general word, Out of a fecret place cometh

Out of the South cometh

VVe fay best, Out of the South; First, because it is expressly opposed to the North in the Text; Secondly, because Southern VVinds are the strong st and most vehement VVinds, as the Northern are the coldest. For though we find by experience, that strong VV inds blow from all Quarters of Heaven, yet usually the South brings forth the strongest VVinds; and therefore in Scripture a fudden and violent VVind is called a VVhirl-wind out of the South. VVhen the Prophet would describe an unavoydable coming of Judgment, he faith (IJa. 21. 1.) As Whirlwinds in the South pass through, so it cometh &c. And again (Zech. 9. 14.) The Lord God hall blow the Trumpet, and hall go with Whirlwinds of the South. Both places expressing it, according to what was most usually and commonly known, great VV inds coming out of the South. That place (Plal. 126. 4.) is rendred endio et captiby some (not as we, Turn again our Captivity, O Lord, as the vitate, ea cele. Streams in the South, but) Turn again our Captivity, as Storms ritate, quaturbo or Whirlwinds in the South. The Church prayed that God would make some sudden change of things, like that made by Southern Storms and V Vhirlwinds. Yet we are not to understand it, as if all Southern V Vinds were V Vhirlwinds or tempestuous; favourable refreshing VVinds come from thence sometimes, as may be collected from the 17th verse of this Chapter, and from Canticles the 4th, verse the 16th, and as is expressed (Alls 27. 12.) The South Wind blew softly. So that Elihu speaks of what is often and usually done, not of what is alwayes done, when he faith,

Redeamus tua et procella erumpunt ab australi plaga. Bold.

The Whirlwind.

That's wind with an addition, a Whirlwind is more than an ordinary wind. Wind is one of those Mereors, which God the Author of Nature hath provided for the use of man: It is called by one of the Ancients, the agitation or flux of the Air. Much might be spoken about the natural causes and matter of winds, but I shall not infift upon that. A VVhidwind is a tempestuous wind; the Turbo, a Gra-Geeks have a special word for it, and so have the Latines, both cis nipay a importing violence, or that which troubles and turns all upfide Plinio vorten down, and throweth every thing out of its place: Such a boytte- vocatur. rous thing is the VV hirlwind, 'cis a toffing, tumbling, breaking, vis fluxus feu disturbing wind; this VVhirlwind

Cometh out of the South.

It cometh. A like or the same expression is applyed to the Sun, c. 8. (Plal. 19.3.) He hath set a Tabernasle for the Sun, which is as a Bridegroom coming out of his Chamber, and rejoyceth as a strong man to run a Race. As the Sun cometh every morning out of his Chamber by Gods approyntment; so doth the VVhi-lwind at special times appointed by God. 'Tis firly said such fierce and un uly winds come forth, for they are as it were kept fall in prison till God takes off their Bonds, and opens their Prison-dore, and then out they come furiously and boysterously, to do the work God hath commanded and defigned them to. Out of the South cometh the Whirlwind.

When Elibs faith, The VVhirlwind, the great VVind cometh out of the South, he doth not express, yet in images, who it is that brings the VV hirlwind out of the South: The VV hi lwind cometh, but it doth not come before it is fent. The fcore of Eliku all along is, to thew the mighty power of God in ordering and dilposing the Mereors, and among them, these mighty winds.

Hence Note ; Winds come at Gods appoyntment.

He is the Author of them, he is the disposer of them, he rules their most unruly motions. The Heathen Poets seign da god of the winds, whom they called Lolus, who was P'Aun'd or Saued puffing the winds out of his mouth. But 'tis Jehovah who ha k Rrr

סונה

Ventus est Aeagitatio. Damasc. 1. 2. de Orthod fide.

the winds in his power, the winds and the Whirlwind. Neither the Heathen god Loliu, nor the god of this World the Devil, nor the Devils of this World, VVirches and Conjurers, have any power of their own over the least breath of wind, either to raise or lay it. Agar describing the Excellency of God, both in himself and in his working, faith among other things (Prov. 30. 4.) He gathereth the Wind in his Fift; implying, that God hath the winds in his hand, even as a man carryeth a thing in his hand, or holderh it in his Fift, keeping it there, or letting it out at pleasure or as he lifteth. (Pfal. 135. 7.) He bringeth the Wind out of his Treasure. We read the same in the Prophet (Ter. 10. 13. Fer. 5. 1, 16.) These Treasures out of which God brings the wind, some call the Secrets of Nature, or secret natural Causes: but I conceive 'tis an allulion to the Customes of men, who lay up things useful in private places, that they may have them at hand when occasion calls: Chaift reacheth us, in imitation of them, to get and keep by us such Treasuries of saving Truth (Math. 13. 52.) To be fure, God hath the winds ready, he hath a store and stock of them, which upon any occasion he can bring forth.

God makes a twofold use of the winds, or, there are two general purposes, for which he brings them out of his Treasures. First, for good; Secondly, for hurt to the VVorld: First, in

Mercy; Secondly, in Judgment.

First, God brings them forth out of his T easures in a way of Mercy, and for good to Mankind. And there is a fixfold good or good use, for which God brings the winds out of his Treasure.

First, to cleanse and purge the Air; therefore, by some, the winds are called The Brooms of Heaven. VVhen the Air is corrupt and soul, God sweepeth it by these Brooms. And we find, when Judgment is threatned, a negative is put upon the wind as to this use, (fer. 4.11.) A dry wind of the High-Places of the Wilder-ness, toward the Daughter of my people, not to san or to cleanse, &c. Implying that one merciful use of the winds, is to san and to cleanse the Air, as Coin is sanned and cleansed.

Secondly, God brings the winds out of his treasure to temper the Air. VVhen the Air is cooled by a gentle Brieze, we count it a mercy in hot seasons. And such is the goodness of God, that in those places where the heat is most troublesome, there are many cool Briezes. We read (Gen. 3. 8.) of the cool of the day,

Venti Aquilonares dicuntur
fco e cali,
quod reddunt
aerem mundum. Vatabl:

or (as the Margin hath it) the wind of the day, implying that the extream heat of the day is usually alfwaged and cooled by the wind. The Prophet (Fer. 14. 6.) describing a time of drought, saith, The wild Affes did stand in the high places, they snuffed up the wind like Dragons. To snuffe the wind in time of drought, is

a great refreshing; wind refresheth the body as well as food, and it some refreshing in samine, or want of food.

Thirdly, The wind is a Rain-bringer. We say when the wind riseth there will be rain. Thus (1 Kings 18.45.) before the mighty rain which Elijah foretold, we read of a wind; The Heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. When Elisha told those three Kings distressed for want of water, Te shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain, yet that valley shall be filled with water (2 Kings 3.17.) he thereby implyed, that wind is the ordinary fore-runner of rain. We, indeed, translate (Prov. 25.23.) The North wind driveth away therain; yet we put in the Margine, The North wind bringeth sorth the rain. It is true of both; the wind scattereth and driveth away the rain, the wind also bringeth rain.

Fourthly, The wind causeth vegetables to flourish. A sweet gale of wind is not only good for man and beast, but for the grass, and for the herbs, for plants and trees, the blowing of the winds maketh them flourish; in allusion unto which the Church speaks (Cant. 4. 16.) Awake, O North wind, and come thou South, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out; that is, that my Graces, my faith in thee, my love to thee, &c. may put forth and appear. The spiritual wind, the breathings of the Spirit, draw forth spiritual fruit from the heart, and in the life of believers, as the natural draws forth the natural fruits of the Earth.

Fifthly, The winds are beneficial and helpful for the drying up of the waters, they make the earth clean as well as the air. It is faid (Gen. 8. 1.) after the whole world was drowned, God made a mind to pass over the earth, and the maters as maged. The

wind is a dryer as well as the Sun.

Sixthly, There is a great use of the winds, as to artificials. What mighty things are done by the wind? By it, Mills are turned to grin'd Corn at Land, and Ships are moved to carry both Men and Merchandize at Sea; there were hardly any patting from Nation to Nation, far disjoyned by water, but by the advantage or help of winds; by the help of winds Merchants bring treasure R r r 2 and

and precious things from one end of the earth to the other. These and many more are the common benefits of the winds, for which the Lord brings them out of his treasures.

Secondly, The winds have their evil effects, God fends them

fomtimes for a plague, or in a way of Judgment.

First, Winds often insect the air; the Lord can send, as a cleansing, so a corrupting wind.

Secondly, As wind brings rain, so it hinders or blows away.

the rain.

Thirdly, The Lord fends the wind to break and overthrow all that stands before it. What doth not the whitlwind overthrow? Houses and Trees at Land are blown down; Goodly Ships at Sea, righly laden, have been sunk and over-fet by tempestuous winds. God sent a whirlwind out of his treasure, which caused the Mariners in Jonah to cast their Merchandize into the Sea, and Jonah himself too. What cross and tempestuous winds did the Apostle Paul meet with in his voyage to Rome (Acts 27.)

Further, That the Lord bringeth the winds out of his treafure, is matter of great comfort to all that have an interest in the Lord; He can command the winds for them, and against their enemies; the wind cometh our of his Chamber, and it shall do as he commandeth. It is said (Nahum 1. 3.) The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind, and in the storms, and the clouds are the dust of his feet: That is, he ruleth whirlwinds, he walks in and works by the whirlwind, and by florms. And as we may take it properly, so meraphorically; that is, in the most rempessuous dispensations and providences, when the world is, as it were, in an Haricane, as boysterous winds in some places are called. In the grearest concustions and confusions, whether of things or persons, the Lord carrieth on his work in a regular course. As the great roffings of the air by mutural winds, so the greatest costings of affairs by the firong and various passions of mens spirits in the world (which we may call civill winds, yea whirlwinds) are under the ordering of divine power and wildome. The Prophet (Ifa. 17. 13.) admonisherh the wicked to take heed and give glory to God : For (faith he) the Nations shall rush like the rulling of many waters; But God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaffe of the mountaines before she wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind. A rolling thing shing is unfleadfast at all times, and a whirlwind will make that roul and tumble which is very fleadfast; it maketh Trees to shake, it maketh strong Towers tremble: Now if the whirlwind causeth things that are fixed and strong to shake and move, what will it do to those that are light and unfixed, rolling things! That which is (as men judge) fixt and steady as a Rock, shall be as a rolling thing before the whirlimind of the Lords displeasure. The Margin of our Bibles calls this rolling thing, Thiftle-down. We know what the down of a Thistle is, which at some seasons of the year falls off, and is the lightest thing imaginable. When there is not a breath of wind Hirring, the Thistle-down will stir, roll, and move from place to place; what then, think you, will become of Thiftledown before a mighty wind, a whirlwind? The wicked shall be as Thiftle-down before the whirlwind; but the people of Ged need not fear, for (as 'tis faid of the Sea, so of the wind) his way is in it, he rules the proper, and he rules the metaphorical whitlwinds, which tofs and tumble the state and affaires of this world. To close this matter,

We may take notice of several wonderfull things in and about the wind; and because Elihu ranks this among the great works of God, who doth marveilous things which we comprehend not, not Nulla propeno. only in Thunder and Lightning, in Snow and Rain, but in the winds, dum regio eft, the efore I will reckon up seven wonders which peculiarly con- que aliquem

cern the winds.

First, . This is considerable, That there is scarce any Country circase cadenbut breeds some wind or other, which blows most there, and ex- tem non habeercifeth a peculiar force upon it; these are called Provincial at. Sen: 1.5. Winds. The North-west wind (saith Plinie) is proper to the A- Natur: quest. thenians, other parts of Greece having little acquaintance with it. Plin: 1. r. The North-east wind afflicts Calabria, And that several other cap. 47 winds, are congenial to other Countries, whereof some are be- In infula Lesbor nigne and favourable, others vexatious and uncomfortable to them, Oppidum Mymay be seen in the Authors quoted in the Margin.

Secondly, 'Tis a wonder that the same wind in one Country est, sed impru-

causeth fair weather, in another rain and storms.

Thirdly, That the same wind is in one place very healthy, and quod in eaciviin another causeth sickness by corrupting the air, and so the blood tate cun Asser-and spirits of men. A learned Author sith, when-ever the South appoint mind bloweth in such a Country or City, the people fall stek.

Nascentem, & ce ædifi atum denter positum

agrotant.

Vitru: l. E. Fourthly, c. 5.

Fourthly, That's also observable, that some winds are hot and dry, others cold and moyst, according to the temperature of the places from whence they come, and thorough which they passe to us.

Fifthly, 'Tis marveileus that in some parts of the world, the wind blows constantly one way; such are called trade windes. Expert Sea-men know where to fetch a wind, when once they get to such a poynt they never miss it. The Etesian winds are famously known in History, blowing out of the East or North-east yearly at one time, for the space of forty dayes together; these Cicero called Anniversary winds.

Sixthly, Yet in most places nothing is more unconstant than the wind; inconstancy it self is Embleamed by the winds. No man knoweth when or where to have them certain for an houre; Hence we say, Take the Wind while it serveth. Wind and tyde tar-

ry for no man.

Seventhly, That's also wonderfull, That winds blow at once from contrary poynts, North and South, &c. at the same time. Daniel (Chap. 7. 2.) saw in a vision the four Winds striving together upon the Sea; All the winds were let loose together, contending (as it were) for victory. Naturalists dispute and question whether contrary winds can blow at once; Aristotle, the great Philosopher, affarmes they cannor, because (saith he) the one must needs beat back the other. That's true; yet, what hinders but that for a time there may be such a conflict or battel fought between them, as may extreamly trouble both the air and waters, and shake vehemently such things as stand in their way on earth? The Natural Historian reports, That two confiderable Cities in the Corinthian Bay, were suddenly swallowed up by the Sea, which inundation was caused by the fierce blowing of the North and South wind at one and the same time. Out of the South cometh the whirlwind,

Plin: 1. 2.

Arist: 1. 2. Met: c. 6.

A radice in a radice in a radice in a radice in a reventare difference intelliguntar venti aquilonares, qui differgunt nubes, et aerom ventilant.

And cold out of the North.

wentos dispergentes intelliguntar venti a- cold; Mr Broughton renders, And cold from the faire weatherquilonares, qui Winds. Our translation determines it.

Cold

Cold out of the North.

Boreas & ighn-28 ETHS dicitur

Common experience reacheth us, that the Northern coasts are quia gignit cold, yea the coldest coasts: The coldest freezing winds come out nitatem. Hoof the North, as the ffrongest out of the South. Here is North nier; Odysse. and South, and here are the several effects of them; the South breaths warmth, and the North cold.

Hence Note; Cold comes at Gods call.

Now the South wind bloweth, and then 'tis warme, anon the North wind blows, and then its cold. God hath his special storehouses for hear and cold, he brings cold our of his Northern storehouse, and not only hear but whirlwinds out of his store-house in the South. Cold is disposed of by God as heat is, somrimes for the good, somtimes for the hurt of the creature. Cold is both needfull and hurtfull; cold is needfull to the body of man, and cold is needfull to the body of the earth; therefore God hath that in his treasure to se we the uses of man with. Changes from heat to cold, fet forth, First, Gods power; Secondly, His care: If the air were kept alwayes at one rate, or in the same temper, neither windy nor stormy, neither very hot nor very cold, we poffibly would like it better, but it would be worse for us. Changes in the air are so usefull, that nature could not be well preserved without them, we would have all things alike, we would have it alwayes warme weather, alwayes faire, but God feeth 'tis best for us, there should be changes in natural things for our natural good. It is also best for our spiritual good to have providential changes. God feeth it needfull to leave us somtimes under clouds and da kness, to bring cold as well as heat out of his treasures, to send us chilling times as well as springing times; cold is as good for our inner man as hear, stormes as calmes, foule weather as faire. Now for a season (faith the Apostle, 1 Pet. 1.6.) if need be yes are in heaviness through manifold temp acions. The coldness of the air kills the weeds in our grounds, fo doth the cold of affliction Frigora tempeand tribulation the weeds of corruption in our fouls. Seafonable structure cold makes trees and plants more fruitfull in their feafons: The conforum feecold nipping frosts of affliction, dispose our souls (through the cunditation, bleshing of God) to a gracious fruitfulness in every good word Garci Meteor:

and work. We would alwayes have it spring and Sun-shine, peace and safety, but God knows it must be otherwise; perpetual shining and faire seasons are reserved for Heaven. While we are on Earth the cold of adverfity is as advantagious to our spiritual condition, as the coldness of the air is to our natural. Out of the South cometh the whirlwind, and cold out of the North.

Vers. 10th. By the breath of God frost is given, and the breadth of the waters is straitened.

In the former part of this verse, we have the supream cause of frost, and in the latter an effect of it. By the breath of the Lard frost is given, or, he giveth frost by his breath. The Hebrew is active, we translate patrively.

By the breath of the Lord.

Flante deo, i.c.

That is, God breathing or blowing; not that the Lord useth deo ipsum fla- breathing or blowing properly, he is a Spirit : But the Lord is faid tum eaufante. to breath or blow when he commands the wind to blow or breath. The winds are called Gods breath, or spi it. Some of the Hebrew Doctors, understand nothing else but his bare will and command, or the intimation of his mind to have it so; but I rather take, it for the frost-making winds which are sent by God. By the breath of the Lord, that is, when the Lord appoynts and orders cold winds to come out of his treasure, when the Lord gives out the word of command, cold winds issue forth, and then frost appears. David affirmes in general, (Pfal. 33. 6.) By the word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Host of them by the breath of his mouth. The Heavens and their Hofts, all the powers and vertues of them, all the influences and efficacies of them are given out by the breath of the Lord. And among other things that are given by the breath of the Lord

A verbo dei dat Gelu. Chald: pro a voluntate dei dat gelu, sc: Arcturus.

Frost is given.

Frost is cold in excess, frost is great cold; every cold is not freezing cold. The word which we render froft, is often ended ice, and it cometh from a root which fignifieth to make bald because frost and ice cover the grasse (which is to the ground as haire to the head of man) and so make the surface of the Earth smooth like a bald head. Frost also makes the surface of the Earth, not only Imooth, Hence Note; Frost is the gift or dispensation of God.

Changes in the air, as well as changes in the estates, lives, or hearts of men, are from the Lord (Pfal. 147. 17.) He giveth snow like mooil: he scattereib the hoar frost like ashes: He cast eth forth his ice like morsels; who can stand before his cold? It is Gods ice and his cold as well as his rain or his Sun-shine. When the Pfalmist saith, He scattereth the frost, he casteth forth his ice, he faith the same thing in substance which Eliha doth here, By the breath of the Lord frost is given: There is a continuall dependance of all creatures in their motions and operations, as well as in their beings, upon the will of God, 'cis by his word that frost is given. Some deny the working of the first cause with the second causes, any otherwise than as God once gave them a working power, and conserveth that power once given them. Whereas indeed God hath not only given a general power to the creature, not only hath he said, There shall be frost sometimes, and heat sometimes, and fair weather somtimes, but when-ever the heat or cold or frost come, they come by a particular order from him. As all things, men especially, have their being in him, so their working and moving from him; and that not only because he makes us in general, working, moving creatures, but as to every special work and motion. This the Prophet afferts, while he puts those reproving questions (Ifa. 10. 15.) Shall the axe boast it self against him that heweth therewith ? or shall the saw magnifie it self against him that shakethit? as if the rod should shake it self against them that lift it up, or as if the staffe should lift up it self, as if it were no wood. Living and natural creatures move no more without God, than artificial and liveless instruments (such as the axe and saw, the rod and flaff) can move themselves without the hand or help of man. By the breath of the Lord frost is given,

And the breath of the water is straitned.

This is an effect of the former. Frost drinks up the waters, Glacies eff coand so straitens them: some define ice, which is made by the frost, pia aqua in to be store of water in a little room, or narrow compasse. Every years angusto. S f f experi-

experience tells us, that the waters are pinched with the frost. Waters which were out before a frost, are fetcht in or contracted by the frost; hence 'cis said (Chap. 38. 30.) The waters are hid as with a stone, which is of the same sence with this expression, The breadth of the water is straitned; God brings the waters into their old bounds, or into narrower bounds than before, by frost. F om this effect of frost, that the breadth of the water is straitned by it,

Note; Cold is a straitner.

'Tis fo in natural things, 'tis fo also (to mind the reader of that occasion d this note) in spirituals and morals. Take coldness as it is an ill disposition, or an indisposition upon the heart, it straitens us, as to the doing of any good; for, as Christ hath foretold us (Mat. 24. 12.) that because iniquity shall abound (in the latter dayes) the love of many shall wax cold: So when-ever love or zeal, or any grace in us waxeth cold, piety, in all the acts or whole compasse of it, will certainly decline and be strained He that before had a large heart, becomes narrow-hearted, and is pinched in his spirit by this sinsul coldnesse. Warmth enlargeth, Cold fraireneth. God fends the cold of afflictions upon many bad men, to fraiten their Lufts, else they would keep no bounds, they would overflow all; and it is the great design of Satan to fend a cold upon, or to frieze the spirits of all good men, that they may be straitened and made unfit for the service of God. Take heed of a coldness in your disposition, for that will be a straitner of your graces; but welcome the frost of affliction, that may be a firaitner of your corruptions. There is nothing we should fear more (except the loss of them, and the favour of God with them) than to feel our graces straitened; not is there any thing (except the favour of God) which we should more defire, than to feel our lusts and corruptions weakned and abated.

Et rurfum la-Ego confense vim illis qui participium PSID

Some render this latter part of the verse not as we, The breadth tissime fundun- of the waters is straitned; but, The waters are dissolved into their bur aqua. Vulg breadth. As if Elihu had said, the ice or frost being dissolved, the waters return to their wonted latitude. The word rendred fraitened, may be derived from a foot which fignifierh to diffolve, to melt and pour out. Thus, as according to our translation, we take

the

the latter part of the verse as an effect of the first, frost being that non araum vel whereby the breadth of the waters is straitned; so according to angustum, sed this translation, it flands in opposition to the former, By the breath fusur aut foluof the Lord frost is given, and he again (by his breath) distribute dumt. Sie aguithe water. Thawing as well is freezing is from God. Thawing is lonifacultatem the melting of the ice; as mettal is melted in the fire, so ice is efficiendi gelu, melted by the heat of the Sun. Thus the North makes ice, and auftro liquanthe South unmakes or meles it. The power of God is to be seen in di di tribuit. diffolying those huge rocks and mountains of ice into water, as Bold. well as in congealing those mighty floods of water into icy rocks. David celebrateth the power of God in this also (Pfal. 147.18.) He sendeth out his word, and melteth them (that is, the morsels of ice spoken of vers. 17.) He causeth the mind (a warm thawing wind) to blow, and the waters flow, that is, those waters which were bound up by the cold, flow away by hear. Some infift much upon this translation. It is of the Lord that the waters are enlarged or straitned, frozen or dissolved. I leave it with the Reader which to pitch upon (both are safe and honourable to God) and proceed to the next verie.

> Verf. 11. Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud, nomine '7 quo he scattereth his bright cloud.

There is a four-fold reading or exposition of the former part of this verse; By matering he wearieth the thick cloud.

First, thus, For watering, or, that he may water the earth, he Cum tempus wearieth the thick cloud, that is, he calleth up fo much vapour as irriganditerburdens or wearieth the thick Cloud, that he may have sufficient ram est condensate for the watering of the earth by rain. God cause h his vapour to nubes ill asque ascend, saith the Prophet (Fer. 10. 13.) that is, he draws up magna aquamuch water by vapors, as the matter of clouds, or as the matter out rum copia graof which clouds are made, and he fills the cloud fo full of wa- vidan efficit. of which clouds are made, and he mis the cloud to the Inde apud ter, that it can scarce bear the weight; and all this he doth for the Hometum. plentiful watering of the earth.

Secondly thus, He canfeth the cloud to give out, or spend its wa- Zeus, i.e. ter till it be meary. We say of any thing that is spent to the last, nubium conit is tired and wearied. Thus the Lord by watering wearies the gregatur Jupithick cloud, commanding the clouds to pour rain upon the earth, tor. Bold. till they are tired, till they have spent all their store, and cannot Mercerus.

Sff 2

posita est prapositione Id Significatur irrigatio, a verba וווי irrigare. Pifc.

yeeld

yeeld a drop more. Yet because to water the earth is the most

proper and natural business of the cloud, therefore,

Thirdly, Alearned Expositor conceives, that the cloud is not wearied by watering or raining upon the earth; but that on the contrary the cloud is faid to be wearied or troubled, when, while it is about that work, it is scattered or dispersed by the Sun or

Fourthly, Others refer this wearying of the cloud, to the command which it receives for the watering of very remote parts of the earth. The Lord faith to this or that cloud, remove far off, go. and water such a Countrey (it may be a hundred, yea, many hundred miles off the place from whence the vapours were exhaled). and there disburden thy felf, or fall down in showres. When the Lord sends the cloud a long journey, we may say, 'tis even wearied, as a man or beaft is that hath gone a long journey.

Prumentum defiderat nubes. Vulg.

1 17. cap. 2.

I shall not trouble the reader with that wide interpretation of the Latine translator, rendring thus, The cloud defires corn, or the Cibin arborum cloud labours for corn, that is, to make the earth fruitful, and bring imber eft. Plin. forth abundance of corn. Some of the Ancients have taught that there is a kind of natural marriage, between the earth and the clouds, or between the clouds and the corn, or any other fruits of the earth. Rain is the food of the earth, that is, of Fruits and Plants; to which the Prophet (Hof. 2. 22.) makes an elegant allusion. But I pass this.

The second interpretation I judge most congruous to the scope of the text, which faith clearly, Alfo by watering he mearieth, the

shick cloud.

Whence note; Those creatures which have greatest stores to give, may quickly have none left to give.

Here is a cloud and a thick cloud (Eliha doth not speak of an ordinary, but of a thick cloud) yet upon the Lord's command to give showres the cloud is quite spent and wearied. Though men have the greatest affluence, the largest stores and stock, of wealth or riches, yea of gifts and graces, yet they may be wearied, and even drawn dry. The thickest clouds, that is, they who have the greatest treasures of strength, of wit, of learning and knowledge, are soon wearied, exhausted and emptied, unless they live in dependance pendance upon God; Only, God himself can never be wearied by watering. How much soever God giveth out to us, he is not at all empried, but remaines everlastingly equally sull. And if God will speak to the meanest creature, even to that which seemeth most empty, it shall water others and not be wearied. The thick clouds, they who have much, may be spent, while he that hath but a little shall not be spent. The Prophet said to the poor woman (1 King. 17.14.) The oyl in the cruse, and the meal in the barrel skall not maste. The woman might draw out of the oyl as long as she would, and still there would be a supply of oyl, nor would the barrel be weary in yeelding meal. The Lord can make the creature unwearied, and establish it to us for good. A full cloud will soon drop away, if the Lord forbear supplies; and a few drops shall be as an everlatting spring where the Lord gives out supplies. We may also allude to that (2 King. 4. 2.) There was a poor widow, and the creditors were ready to seize her two sons for bondmen, and, faith the, I have nothing but a little pot of oyl, and what will that do towards payment? Well, faith the Prophet, Go borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels, berrow not a few, and thou shalt draw out of the pot, and the pot of oyl shall not be wearied by giving oyl into the vessels. God speaking to the pot of oyl it yeelded a continued supply; the oyl never ceased till the woman had not a vessel to receive it. If God saich to the least pirrance of temporals, which a man hath in this wold, hold our, it shall not fail nor be weary; 'tis so likewise in spiri nals, the Lord can make a little grace hold out, the thinnest cloud shall not be wearied by watering.

Again, By watering he wearieth the thick cloud, that is, God

giveth out flow.es to water the earth abundantly.

Hence note; God is very free and liberal;

He will empty the thick cloud upon the earth to make it fruitful; He gives not only a few drops, but abundance; and this is most true in spirituals. How doth the Lord showre down and empty even whole clouds of good things upon the soul! as he hath promised, so he once did, and still doth sometimes (and will more in the last times) poure out the Spirit, which is an allusion to those showres of rain powered from the clouds: And as the Lord powers

powres out his Spirit, which can never be wearied or drawn dry; so the Lord makes use of many thick clouds (which hold much spiritual rain) even to weariness, for the refreshing of wearied fouls; I mean such Ministers as he hath furnished with great gifts and graces, such as are not (as the Apostle Fude compareth some Teachers) Clouds without water, but (as true and faithful Teachers thould be)full of water. The waterings of any Apillo are at the Lords dispose : He saith, drop thy word here, drop thy word there, and thou shalt not drop thy word any more here or there. The Lord hath often been so bounciful to Nations and Churches, that he hath even wearied many thick clouds to water them with the rain of his word. That of the Pfalmist (though it be true of the rain p operly taken, falling upon the earth) is most true of spi itual rain falling upon the Churches (Pfal. 65.10.) Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly, thou setlest the furrows thereof. And so is that also to be understood (Pfal. 68. 9.) Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain (or rain of liberalities) whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance when it was meary. Thou didit even weary the thick cloud, to confirm, that is, to refresh thy weary peo-

ple. And seeing they who carry and dispence the Word are in Scilpture emblematically expressed by Clouds (Isa. 60. 8. Who are these that slee as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? The Preachers of the Gospel come as so many clouds, and the Prophet tells us, the Word cometh down as rain and snow from heaven (1sa. 55. 10.) which supposeth a cloud from whence it cometh: for, saith the Lord, So shall my word be that goeth out of my mouth. it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please; Seeing, I say, the dispensers of the Word are compared to clouds) let them that fit under the droppings of these clouds take heed they be not unfruitful, or like that ground which drinketh in the rain, yet beareth nothing bur briars and thorns, whose end is to be burned. God hath wearied and quite spent many of these thick clouds by continual dropping upon, and watering the fouls of men, yet how barren, how fruitless are they! If but one of the clouds of heaven be wearied in watering the earth, we foon after discern the face of the earth refreshed and renewed by it: And shall God weary those heavenly clouds by watering men on earth, and men remain unrefreshed, unrenewed! Clouds of sorrow and

da kness

darkness will at last weary all those with their waterings and droppings upon them, who, when God hath wearied his Clouds by watering them with the word of life from Heaven, yet remaine altogether barren and unfruitfuil. By matering he mearieth the thick Cloud.

He scattereth his bright Cloud.

The former part of the verse spake of athick Cloud, this latter Nubes en cujus speaks of a bright Cloud: The Hebrew is, The Cloud of his light; cem restituit. which I conceive is here added; First, to shew that Clouds of all Hanc appellat forts serve the purposes of God; the thick Cloud, and the bright nuber luci dei, Cloud, the dark Cloud, and the light Cloud, are made use of by quadispulsalina him. And as he doth weary the Cloud, that is full of water, fo he ducitur. Merc: scartereth the Cloud that is full of light, or, he seattereth his bright Cloud.

Yer some confidering it is not said in the letter of the Text, Nubem lucis, A light Cloud, but a Cloud of light, understand by a Cloud of light, non dicit lucifuch a Cloud as hides and hinders the light, and which being scat- lucen absentered, light and faire weather succeed. Yet rather as before. dit. Coc-But why is it here said, that he scattereth his bright Cloud? possibly, because he hath no use of his bright Cloud, but of his thick Cloud only, when he would water the earth. And indeed Clouds which are only bright, or which have much light, but no water, are of little use. Some have much light of knowledge, but no water of instruction to drop upon others; such Clouds God disperfeth and scatters. It is not an outward faire appearance, which can bring us into acceptance with God, The bright Cloud shall be scattered, it it have no rain in it, to water the earth.

Againe, Some tranflate, His light scattereth the Cloud. So the text may be read according to the letter of the Hebrew; as if the meaning were this, God by the Sun-beams dispels or disperseth the Cloud; for Clouds are scattered sometimes by the wind, sometimes by the Sun. That which gathered the Cloud, may also scatter it. The Sun draweth up the vapours, of which Clouds are formed or compacted, and soone after the Sun dissolveth the Clouds, which it had gathered. The same power makes and unmakes the Cloud, gives it a body, and takes it away; His light scattereth the Cloud. That's a truth also: For as brightness or light is scattered among the Clouds, and makes the Clouds appeare

bright,

bright, so brightness or light scatters Clouds, or causeth them to

disappeare.

Eliku having thus discoursed of wind and cold, of freezing and thawing, of working some Clouds to weariness, and of scattering others, proceeds in the two following verses, to shew the special uses which the Lord makes of all those motions in the air, and impressions upon the Earth, with the Inhabitants of it, whether in a way of Judgment or of Mercy.

J O B, Chap. 37. Verf. 12, 13.

12. And it is turned about by his counsel: that they may do what soever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth.

13. He canseth it to come, whether for correction,

or for his land, or for mercy.

N the former verse Elihu spake of the Clouds, of the thick Cloud wearied with watering, and of the bright Cloud, scattered by the Wind or Sun. In these two verses he surther sets down

two things more generally concerning the Clouds.

First, He shews whence the motion of the Cloud is, and by what or whom directed; It is turned about by his counsel, in the beginning of the 12th verse, and he causeth it to come, at the beginning of the 13th verse. There we have the Spring of the Clouds motion.

Secondly, Elihu shews the purpose, or the design of the Lord in turning about the Clouds by his counsel; which design is said

down two wayes.

First, In general, That they may do what soever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth; that's the first purpose of God in moving the Clouds, they are to execute his Commands; and that's his general purpose.

Secondly, We have his special purposes or designs laid down in the close of the 13th verse, and they are three-fold. He turn-

eth about the Cloud, and causeth it to come,

First,

First, For Correction. Secondly, For his Land. Thirdly, For Mercy.

Chap. 37.

He causethit to some (saich Elibu) whether for Correction, for his Land, or for Mercy; all these purposes and designs God hath in moving and ordering these valt and mighty bodies of the Clouds, which hang like Mountains in the air. Thus you have the parts of these words, with their scope and tendency. More di-Hinckly.

Vess. 12. And it is turned about by bis counsel.

First, Vapours are raised and condensed into Clouds by the counsel of God, he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth, (Pfal. 135.7.) Which vapours (as was shewed before) are the material cause or matter of the Clouds.

Secondly, As by the counsel of God the vapours are raised, of which Clouds are made; for this Text tells us, that by his counfel the Clouds are moved, and order'd in their motion; which motion of the Clouds is very various; fortimes one way, formtimes another, somtimes forward, somtimes backward, or retrograde; somtimes their motion is circular, as the word here used by Elihu seemeth to imply, It is turned or whirled about; according to that of Solomon (Eccl: 1. 6.) The wind goeth toward the South, and turneth about unto the North; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his Circuit. We have here three words expressing the motion of the wind. First, it goeth; Secondly, whirleth about; Thirdly, returneth again; and all this according to its circuits. It is said of Samuel (1 Sam. 7. 16.) He went from year to year in circuit, to Bethel and Gilpal, and Mizpet, and judged Ifrael in all these places. Thus the winds according to the Commission they receive from God, ride every year in circuit, now they are in one quarter, and anon in another, and wherefoever they come they may be faid to do judgment in a way of favour to some, and in a way of displeasure unto others. The wind hath his Circuits, and as the Circuit of the wind is fuch is the Circuit of the Clouds; the motion of the Clouds is from the wind, some fay from the Starrs, but most generally, as to the natural cause, it is from the wind, which way the wind moves, that way the Clouds move. And though the motion of Ttt

the Clouds and Winds feems exceeding unfleady and changeable, up and down, without any certain rule in Nature, yet they ob e ve their Circuits, and run their compasse as God appoynts tnem. Mr Broughton tenders, And for varieties, he turneth himfelf in his wife Counfels for their operation, for what seever he Commandeth them; It is turned about (lay we)

By his Cons fel.

Propriè rei nautica peritia, græ intrastandis fu nibus potifimum ansistit, unde nominis appollatio. Drus Convertuntur Tex: Ipja quoq; incircuitibus no'vitur machinu eju. Merc: Vertitur Solertiis ejus. Druf:

It should seem that God even calls a Councel, which way the Clouds shall be directed, they go by his Councel: The word in the Hebrew is a very fignificant one (that I mean) which we render kis Counsel, others his skill, his art or cunning, and there are not a few who render it, hey are turned about by his Engines, as if God did ule (as it were) artificial Engines to turn about those mighty bodies of the Clouds; Properly the word fignifieth the Ropes and Tacking of a Ship, in ordering which Ropes and Tackling the whole management of the Ship dorh confift, The Mariner shews his skill and art in steering his Ship a right course, which he doth, not only by guiding the Rudder, but by ordering the Ropes and Tackling this way and that way, to compasse or avoyd the wind. And the Hebrew word (Tachbuloth) here ufed, bath a very great nearness in found, to the Tackling of a Ship. This is a most elegant Metaphor, slaewing how the Lod doth, as ortificio ipsion. it were, seer the courte of the Clouds, or guide the Clouds, as the Sea-man doth his Ship, his Counfels may be compared to the Tackling and the Ropes, or rather to the Helme, by which the Ship is guided; God is as the great Pilot fitting at the Stein, and he turns these Clouds as his Ship, he turns them about as a Ship tacks this way and that way, to reach her Port and there unlade. The Rain, Snow, & Haile, are the Lading which these swift Shipe, the Clouds, carry from place to place, to serve the providences of God towards man. This divine conduct of the Clouds is very admirable! the Lord knowing what parts of the Earth need those Commodities, Rain, Snow, &c. which those aerial Vetfels are laden with, for the enriching of the world. We render it by his Counsel, that is, by those means which he in his Wildome and Counsel useth to turn the Clouds about, they are turned: we tran-Place the word (Pro. 1. 5.) Wife Counfels, and (Pro. 20. 18.) Good advise, there Schomon faith, With good advice make warre. And

And indeed good advice is the best tackling for Ships in a warre at Sea, and the best ammunition for a warre at Land: Councel is a noble, a notable Engine: The greatest things on Earth are turned about by it, and so are those great things in the air, the Clouds, They are turned about by his Counsel,

That they may do what sever he Commandeth them.

Here's the general defign and purpose of God, in turning about the Clouds whitherfoeve: he please, it is that they may do whatfoever he Commanderh them; where we have the Clouds fet forth,

First, In their obedience, They do the Commands of God.

Secondly, In the univerfality of their obedience, They do whatsever he Commandeth. Elihu compares the Clouds and Meteors to good servants, who are ready to do what God their Master requireth of them; and not only so, but they do his Commands every where, or wherefoever he requires them, they do all his Commands, and that in all places, as the Text speaks in the next words,

Upon the face of the world in the Earth.

That is, wherefoever there is Earth, or a World, habitable or han orbit unhabitable, hither, or so far doth God send the Clouds in his ser- pars terra ba-

vice, or for the executing of his will.

Further, when he faith, Upon the face of the World, his meaning is, upon the outside or uppermost part of the World; and because the Heavens, even the uppermost Heavens are a part of the world, with which the Clouds have nothing to do, their business lying here below, therefore (I conceive) Elihu determines it expresly, in the Earth. The Clouds are not raised or made for the use and service of the world above, but of the world below. They do whatsoever he Commandeth them upon the face of the World in the Earth.

Hence observe, First; The motion of the Clouds is not of themselves, nor meerly from any natural cause or power, but of God;

He as it were by certain Engines and weights, turnes them about; they move not unawares, nor by the unce tain changes of Ttt 2

bitabila, Græce our spens.

the Air, but according to his direction and unchangeable purpose; It is turned about by his Counsel. The creatures do not govern themselves, nor are they Masters of their own motions; The way of man is not in himself, surely then the way of the Cloud is not in it self. Clouds take their course according to the order and command which they receive from God.

Again, The (lands are thus turned about by the Counfel of God,

that they may do what sever he commandeth them,

Hence note; Clouds are fent about work; there's somwhat to be done by every ry Cloud.

God will not have a Vapour arise, nor a Cloud stir for nothing, he commands them to be doing. And if God send Clouds ab oad to work, much more doth he fend man forth into the world to do work, & appoints him what work to do. The first Man was no soonermade, and fet up in a state of created perfection, but he was prefently fet to work, he must be doing (Gen. 2.15.) And the Lord God took the man (or Adam) and put him into the Garden of Eden, to drefs and to till it. From the Angels in Heaven to the worms that creep upon the earth, there's no creature but hath fomwhat to do; yea, not only the living and rational creatures, but (as here in the Text) the very inanimate creatures, the senseless creatures, the Clouds, have somwhat to do, God sends them. forth upon his business. Every creature bath a service, bath somwhat to do: And therefore, it will be ill with those whom God finds idle, or doing nothing, or nothing to any good purpose. That servant had been doing, to whom Chiff in the Parable is represented thus speaking at the last day, well done good and faithful Serwant.

Thirdly observe;
The Clouds are faithful and ready Servants, they do what sever the Lord commands them.

They are Gods Messengers, and they will do any or every Erand, which he sends them about, and trusts them with. 'Tis the duty and commendation of a Servant, to do whatsoever he is commanded. A mans servant must do all his Masters just and lawful commands; he must not take up this or that command to do it,

and pass by the rest. The Rule is plain (Col. 3. 22.) Servants obey your Masters in all things: Much more must a Servant of God obey him in all things. (Asts 13. 22.) I have found David a man after mine own heart; he shall fulfill all my Will. David was a trusty servant; he was not like Saul, who did the Lords work to halves. The Clouds are trusty Servants, they do whatsoever God commands them; and we may distribute the commands which God gives the Clouds, into two Ranks.

Fire, The command of God to the Clouds is somtimes for the hort or punishment of man. God threatens and he executes vengeance by the Clouds (Ezek. 13. 13.) Winds conveigh the Clouds, and the Clouds pour down overflowing shows in the anger of God, and great hail-stones in his sury, to consume and ruine

all before them.

Secondly, Clouds execute the command of God in a way of favour; as they execute his threatnings, so they fulfil his promifes (Hof. 2. 21, 22.) Both these commands to the Clouds are expressly mentioned in the next verse, I only touch them here.

Now for a fruch as the Clouds are here described under the notion of the prest and faithful Servants of God, doing what soever

he commands, take these Inferences from it.

First, If Clouds do whatsoever God commands them, then surely Christians ought to do whatsoever Christ commands them? Shall the Clouds of God out do the children of God in obedience? We find that admonition often urged in the Scripture of the New Testament, especially in the 13th of Mathew, and in the 1st 2d and 3d Chapters of the Revelation, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. But behold a wonder, they that have no ears hear! The Clouds have no ears, and yet they hear, and more than hear, they do the commands of God. What shall we say, when Clouds hear and obey, and men do neither? Let us learn Duty from the Clouds. We are fent to the School of Nature in holy Scripture, almost throughout. Elihu seems to say, Go to the Clouds, O ye that are either slothful or disobedient, consider their work and be wise; they are continually doing whatsoever the Lord commands them.

Secondly, If the Clouds do what foever God commands them, then here's matter of comfort to all who do what God commands them; furely God will not command the Clouds to do them any hurte

hurt who are doing his commands. If you can fay that you do the commands of God, you may rest assured God will never give the Clouds a command to do you hurt. I do not say but an affiction may drop our of the Clouds upon a man that is doing the commands of God; or, the Clouds may have a command to drop affliction upon him that is doing the commands of God: but the Clouds drop no but upon any that do the commands of God. And therefore seeing the Clouds, even those Clouds that carry Storms and Tempests, Thunder and Lightning, Snow, Hill, and Rain, the great Rain of his strength, seing I say, these Clouds, that are the Treaturies and Migazines of such terrible things, are at the command of God, let not his faithful people fear; for when the Winds are Stormy, when the Clouds are black, and carry, as we think, nothing but wrath and death in them, God will take care of them, and charge his Clouds to do them no harm. Clouds, whatfoever they are doing, are doing Gods commands, and doubtless he will not give them any commands for their hurt who keep and do his commands.

And as 'tis matter of comfort to the faithful Servants of God, that he commandeth the Clouds in the Air, so that he also commands those Clouds which are raised in the hearts of men, or that sit and appear in their faces and foreheads. We often see Clouds gather in the Brows of displeased mortals. As some are clouded with sorrow, so others are clouded with anger and wrath. Those black Clouds in the faces of men are as dreadful as the blackest Clouds in the Air; yet the Lord who commands the Clouds in the Air, commands the Clouds of anger and choier, of wrath and indignation, rising out of the hearts, and appearing in the faces of men, and can blow them over, or blot them out, whensoever he

pleaseth.

Thirdly, If the Lord by his commands orders the Clouds, and the Clouds are ready to execute his commands, then let us have high thoughts of the power of God, and of his commands. If men refuse the commands of God, if the flout and hard hearts of men will not stoop to them, the Clouds of Heaven, yea, the clods of the earthwill. Whatsoever God commands, he will have it done; not one title, not one Iota (as Christspake of the Law) shall fall short, or fail, or be unsulfilled. It such and such will not, others shall; if Jewes will not, Gentiles shall; if the Jewes will

not carry it like the children of Abraham, God can and will raife up children unto Abraham of the Stones of the Areet; he will nor want instruments to answer his Counsels, nor to execute his commands. God will shake Heaven and Earth, but he will have his Will done, and his decrees perfected, yea, he will disfolve and ruine them rather than not have his Word fulfilled. That of Darid (Pial. 136.2.) Thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy Name, is true of the word of command, as well as of the word of promise. God will magnifie the word of his promise above all his Name, and he will also magnifie the word of his command above all his Name; that is, his Word is as a glass, wherein his Name, that is, his Holine's, his Power, his Goodness, his Faithfulness, his Mercy, his Justice, and his Wrath, are to be seen, and shall be feen in the accomplishments of it towards the children of men. Therefore fear and admire this mighty God, who will find means for the executing of his Word, for the doing of all that he hath spoken; The Clouds shall do what soever he commandesh them, upon

the face of the world in the earth.

Fourthly, If the Clouds are turned about by his Counsel, if he doth, as it were, hale the Ropes to turn the Clouds which way foever he pleaseth, then, Whenfoever you fee the Clouds gathered by the wind, remember God hath sommhat to do, there's somwhat to be done; these Clouds are the Servants of God, there's some command or word of God or other to be fulfilled. We do no , 15 we ought, consider the Counsel of God in the motion of the Clouds; yez, some when the Clouds gather, and the storms of Wind or Rain, of Thunder and Lightning, break forth, a e more ready to think of the Counsel of the Devil, than of God, they are apt to say, furely, There's Conjuring abroad: What's that, but the executing of the Davils Counsel? whereas we should say, God dorh it by his Counsel. Take heed of neglecting God when you see the Clouds; do not attribute their motion, or the most dreadful Storms that proceed from them, to any thing belied the Counsel of God; for there is not the least vapour can rise out of the earth, for the making of a Cloud, but he causeth it to ascend; there are not any materials gathered toward the conflicuting of a Cloud, but they are under Gods hand, he causeth the vapours to ascend a and there is not the least breath of wind can stir to move the Clouds (Clouds are moved with the wind) but as God hath appointed:

appointed; neither bad Angel, nor good, can stir a Cloud, but as God willeth. And therefore lock to the hand and counsel of God in all these things, take heed of staying in any work of Nature, do not ascribe these impressions and perturbations in the Air to the power of the Devil and wicked Arts; all is of the Lord, whatsoever is done. One of the Ancients said concerning the Devils, when they desired leave to enter the Swine, why should any of the sheep of God be asraid of the Devil, when the Devils cannot have power over the Swine without leave from God? The Devil cannot move a breath of wind, but according to the will of God; though he be the Prince of the Air, yet there is a Prince above him, to whose commands all are subject, both in Heaven and in Earth.

Fifthly, If it be so, that God commands the Clouds when so ever they come with their storms or showes, then ascribe the praise of all the good you receive from the clouds to God, and be humbled under the hand of God, when soever you receive outward

dammage from the clouds, do not fay it is a chance.

Sixthly, Learn hence the greatness and the soveraignty of God, say as they did admittingly (Math. 8. 27.) Who is this, that both the Winds, and Seas, and Clouds obey him! None of the words of the Lord shall fall to the ground, as an Arrow or Dart that misseth the Mark, or as water spilt, that cannot be gathered up again; which latter allusion is specially intimated (1 Sam. 3. 12, 19.) Here in the Text Elihus sets forth the Power and Soveraignty of God, having all creatures at his beck and command, as hath been shewed already from other passages in this Book, and more will occurr hereaster. The Soveraignty of God over men can never be duly acknowledged, till we acknowledge his Soveraignty over Winds and Rain, Hail and Snow, which lye in the Bowels and bosome of the clouds, and from thence are dispensed to the earth, at the will of God.

Seventhly and lastly, If the clouds do whatsoever God commands them, if they be such faithful servants to God, then surely the clouds will one day rise up, or come forth as witnesses against all that resist the commands of God: Not to obey them is bad enough, but to resist them is far worse. Christ would awaken the Scribes and Pharises, by telling them (Math 12. 41.) The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the Judgment against this Generation, and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preach-

ing of Jonah; as also the Queen of the South, because she came from far to hear the wildome of Solomon. If Jeius Christurged those instances of the men of Niniveh, and of the Queen of the South, to terrifie that Generation for not obeying his commands, or for not receiving the Promises of the Gospel; doubtless then in the great Day, the very clouds and winds shall come in as witnesses against all those that have refisted the will of God in any of his commands. Have the Clouds (will he say) done whatsoever I commanded them? and have you resisted? have you cast my words behind your back, when the very Clouds have taken up, embrac'd, and fulfilled them? The Clouds will be a swift witness against all those that rebel against the commands of God : The Snow and Rain, the Winds and Storms fulfilling his word, will bring in a cashing Evidence against all those who have cast his word behind their backs. All this we may read and see in the commanding power of God over the Clouds, and in their readiness to obey. Elihu proceeds.

Vers. 13. He causeth it to come, whether for Correction, or for his Land, or for Mercy.

He, that is, God causeth, It, that is, the Cloud; He causeth the Cloud to find (so the Hebrew) to find every place and every person, concerning whom it hath received command and commission from God. Thus the word is used by Moses (Numb. 32.23.) If ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sin will find you out; that is, the punishment of your sin, and that Judgment which God will pour out upon you for your sin, will find you out wheresoever ye are. In this sence the Cloud will find us out; we render well, He causeth it to come, that is, to come to that place or person, to that Nation or People, to which himself hath appointed it: He causeth it to come,

Whether for Correction, or for his Land, or for Mercy.

Here are three ends or purposes of God, in communicating and commanding forth the Clouds, and we may take those three ends two wayes.

The first of these and the last concern Man more specially; the second concerns all other creatures, both Plants and Beasts of the earth; it concerns all, from the Cedar in Lebanon to the Hy-

sop on the wall, among the Plants, and from the Lion to the Moule, or to the least of living or sensible creatures among the Bealts; all which God, according to his Soveraign Power, and Justice, dorn either comfort or affict as he pleaseth.

Again, The ends which God aimeth ar respecting Man, are ei-

ther for Correction or for Mercy.

Sive ad virmustesav. plinam.

First, He canseth the Cloud, with whatsoever is its burden, Hail, or Rain, or Snow, to unlade and disburden it selt, for corgam, eav reetion, The Hebrewis, for a Rod, so we put in the Margin. A Rod is for correction; therefore we translate for correction, for Sive in disci- discipline. God sends the Clouds to whip or discipline a people. Further, the word signifies a Rod under a twofold Notion.

> First, A Rod or a Staff to smite or strike with, in which sence it is called (Prov. 22. 15.) The Rod of correction; and at the 8th verse of the same Chapter, The Rod of anger; as also (Ifa. 10. 5.) O Affyrian, the Rod of mine anger (taith God) Here's a

Rod to smite with.

Secondly, It fignifies a Rod to govern with, or to rule with; and hence this word denotes the Scepter of a Prince. The two great Emblems of Magistracy are a Sword and a Scepter. The Scepter is in the fashion of a Rod or VV and, which imports chastening and correction; and from hence it was that the chief of the Tribes of the Children of Israel (Numb. 17. 2.) were commanded to take every one of them a Rod, according to the house of their Fathers, twelve Rods, and to write every mans Name upon his Rod, and lay them up in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, etc. Now those Rods given in by the Princes of the Tribes, were is fo many Emblems of their Power and Authority, because to the chief Magistrate the punishment of the faults and miscarriages of all under his government did belong. And hence the same word fignifies a Magistratical Rod or Scepter of Government, and a Tribe or whole Family under the Rod or Scepter of a Governour, because as Rods or B anches grow from one Root, so many Tribes or Families from one Father; thus the Twelve Tribes of Ifrael sprung from Tacob. And that's the Reason why the Latine Tran-Dator renders this place, not as we, (whether for correction) but, Whether for a Tribe; the meaning of which reading, Whether for a Tribe, or for his Land, is thus given, VVhether it be for one particular place, or for the whole Country or earth in general, as Will

will further appear in opening those words, For his Lard. This Translation of the Vulgar Latine, and the Interpretation given upon it, suces well with that of the Prophet (Amss 4.7) where the Lord faith, I cansed it to Rain upon one City, and int upon another: Here was Rain for a Tribe, and not for his Land, not an universal Rain all the Land over; he cau eth it to rain upon one City, not upon ano her, upon one Tribe, not upon another; that's

a good sence, and the word will bear ir.

Yet I rather take it here for a Rod, which imports chastening or correcting, as we translate, Whether it be for Correction. They that carryed the Rod or the Scepter, had also the power of correction in their hand, as was toucht before; and that may be one Reason why when God sent Moses to Pharash (Exod. 4.17.) upon that great Message, the deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt, he commanded him to take his Red in his hand; which Rod held out these two things. First, that Mises came not as a private man to him, but like a Prince, like an Embaffador from the great King, or like one whom he had appointed to take upon him the government of that people, with a Scepter in his hand. Secondly, to let Pharash know, that as God sent him with a power, or cloathed him with a Commission to treat with him, so with a power to scourge or plague him, even with ten Plagues. As if the Lord had said, O Pharach, Seest thou this Rod in the hand of my servant Mofes; assure thy self, thou shalt have stroke upon stroke, plague upon plague, if thou wilt not let my people go. But of that by the way. He causeth it to come for correction, or for a Rod.

Hence note; God can correct us by any of his Creatures.

He can make any thing a Rod; he can make nearest Relations a Rod. A Son is somtimes a Rod to his Father; how often have miscarrying and undutiful children been made a Rod of correction to their Parents Rand they are usually fo, when Parents have not duly corrected their children for their undufifulness and miscarriges. What are cruel men but Rods to other men? Some men have been the scourges of Mankind. Attile, once a great Commander in War, and King of the Hannes, was called The Rod or the Scourge of God. And so God himself called the Affirian the Flagellum Dei. 11 4 11 2

Rod of his anger (Ifa. 10. 5.) David called all wicked men in general the Sword of God, in his prayer for deliverance from them (Pfal. 17. 13, 14.) Deliver my foul from the wicked, thy Sword, from men which are thy hand, O Lord (thy correlling hand, men ordain'd for Judgment, and establisht for Correction, as the Prophet spake of the Chaldeans, Hab. 1. 12.) Who have their portion in this life. And as the Lord makes men, so the Beasts of the earth, a Rod for the correction of Man. Thus the Lord threatned by his Propher, I will fend among them, Sword, and Pestilence,

and noysome Beasts.

Here in the Text we have a Rod made of a Cloud, a strange kind of Rod; I'le fend it for a Rod, it shall come for correction. Parents correct their children with Rods, God corrects the world with Floods; first, with unseasonable, secondly, with superfluous Rains. O what severe corrections hath God laid upon the world by the Clouds! The Clouds have been terrifying, destroying Rods (Exod. 9. 18, 23.) Clouds have destroyed the Fruits of the earth for the sin of Man, and taken away the hopes of the Harvest. Rain from the Clouds hath ruined the dwellings of men, and spoyled both Com and Cattel; Rain from the Clouds was that overflowing scourge, which destroyed the whole earth in the dayes of Noah; then God caused the Cloud to come, I cannot fay for correction, but for ruine, for an universal ruine and devastation. And as God then made the Clouds a ruine to the world, fo he often makes them a correction (1 Sam. 12.18, 19. Ezra 10.9.) we have had many examples, both of sweeping Rains, and dreadful Thunders, Lightning and Tempest, coming forth from the Clouds.

The Apostle Saith (Roms. 1. 18.) The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all angodliness, &c. God hath revealed his wrath from Heaven chiefly in and by the Ministry of his VVord; he may be faid also to reveal his wrath from Heaven against finful man in and by the Ministry of the Clouds; they have often lifted up their Voyce like a foud Trumper, and louder than a Trumper, to tell the sons of men of their tran gression, and to reprove them for their fin. And therefore when we see extraordinary gatherings of the Clouds, we should take instruction, lest we provoke the Lord to fend, or cause them to come for correction. The Clouds drop down many good Lessons and admonitions, and is they are nor attended

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artended to, the next thing they drop is a Rod or Correction; He causeth it to come, whether for correction,

Or for his Land.

For whose Land? Some refer it to the Cloud, that is, for the alii ad nubers Land out of which the Cloud was made; for the Vapours which referunt, ut diarise out of the Land by the attractive power of the Heavens make cat, pro terra Clouds. As if the meaning were, he caufeth the Cloud to fall down upon that Land out of which it was raised: whereas oftentimes a Cloud is made of Vapours raised from one Land or Country, and by the command of God is carryed to another Land or Country very far off.

But I rather take the Antecedent to his to be God himself; His Land, that is, Gods Land, or the Land of God. But then the Question is, what are we to understand by his Land? hath God a Land distinct from others, as the Princes of the World have Pare

not all Landshis? I aniwer,

First, The truth is, all the World is Gods Land; so that wheresoever the Clouds fall they fall upon his Land (Pfal. 50.12.) The World is mine, and the fulness of it, saith the Lord. God is the great Land-lord of all the World.

Secondly, Somtimes in special the habitable part of the World is called the Land of God (Pfal. 24. 1.) there being a part of the World supposed uninhabitable, or wherein no man dwels.

Thirdly, His Land, that is, the Land which God doth pecufiarly own (Exod. 19. 5.) You are a peculiar Treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine. As the Ifraelites were the Lords peculiar people, fo some Lands are his peculiars, he specially calls them his Land, and entitles hunself to them beyond Peculiariter all other Lands. The Land of Canaan was called The Lords Land, terra Dei vobecause he was known and worshipped there (Hos. 9. 3.) We catur terra may say in general, Look in whatsoever Country or place God is Sansta in qua truly known, honour'd, and worfhipped, that is his Land, and that's ercetur. the Land here chiefly intended (fay some) by his Land. He Sic nominat canfeth it to come, whether for correction.

Or for his Land.

That is, for the good and benefit of that Land wherein his Name is professed, and himself truly worshipped. That's a good fence;

Pronomen(fua) fuit. Druf.

unamquamq; gentem cui bene vult.

sence; For doubtless the Lord takes more care of such a Land, than of any other Land. The eyes of the Lord were upon the Land of Canaan, he took care of it from the beginning of the Year to the end thereof, even to water it with the Rain of Heaven (Deut. 11. 12.) Thus 'cissaid (Pfal. 68. 9, 10.) Thou O God didft send (or shake out) a plentiful Rain (a Rain of munificences or liberalities) whereby thou didst confirm thine Inheritance when it was weary: Thy Congregation bath dwelt therein. Every Land to which God bears special respect and good-will (which when soever he doth, he doth it with respect to the people inhabiting

there) may be emphatically called His Land. Yes,

Fourthly, Forasmuch as the latter word for mercy, seems to imply that special favour which God bestowes upon his own people, in sending forth the Clouds with Rain; therefore by His land I rather conceive the earth in general is meant; or yer, to take it more particularly, that part of the earth which no man claims, which is scarce habitable by man, that which is a wast Wilderness or Defart for wild beafts, that Land which is overgrown with Trees and Bushes, a Land which no man dresseth or bestoweth any culture or husbandry upon, even for that Land doth God take care. as his Land, thither he fends Rain, that the Beasts may have Pasture, and Plants moysture, that it may be watered and provided for, as well as those Lands that men by their care and industry manure as their own peculiars. 'Tis faid (Chap. 38. 26.) He (that is, God) can feth it to rain on the earth, where no man is, on the Wilderness, wherein there is no man. Thus in the Text, He causeth it to come for his land, a Land which hath no owner but himself.

> Hence Observe ; God hath an universal respect to, and care over all his Crea-

Wherefoever God hath a foot of Land in the World (though no foot of man comes there) he fends the Clouds to do it fervice, for the fake only of wild Beafts living there, and of Trees and Plants growing there. (Pfal. 36.6.) Lord, thou preservest Man and Beaft: Not only doth God preserve men, but beafts; and where no men are God provides for beafts, that they may have food and live. We may hence argue as the Apostle did in another case. case, (1 Cor. 9 9.) Doth God take care for Oxen? Hath he respect to the wast Lands, to the wild Beasts of the Wilderness? surely then he will take care of inhabited Lands, he will cause the Cloud to come and water the Land where men dwell, especially where good men dwell; to them he causeth it to come (as it followeth in the Text)

For Mercy.

The third Message about which the Clouds are sent or caused to come, is for favour. God dispenceth mercy by the Cloud, he causeth it to come for mercy. The Original word rendred mercy Dei propensam hath a great significancy in it, this especially, a bountiful good-ownibus benewill towards others, without respect to merit, or any antecedent facienti volunt obligation. When here tis said He causeth it to come for Mercy, tatem denotate we are to understand much more than was meant before, when its said, He causeth it to come for his land, to feed the beasts, and nourish the Plants; and I conceive we may give a twofold interpretation of it.

First, For Mercy, that is, for some eminent uses, besides those

that are for meer necessity, to water the earth. Rain is sent,

First, To purge; Secondly, to cool the air; Thirdly, to cherish
and comfort the fruits of the Earth. But besides these common
and ordinary ends of sending rain, somewhat extraordinary seems
to be intended, when the Text saith, He causeth it to some for
mercy, or savour. What's the savour or special mercy that comes
by rain? Surely it is the sending of such a rain and such a blessing with it, as causeth the earth to bring forth abundantly. The
Lord can more than supply wants, he can give plenty, he can give
as n uch in one year as may serve for two of three. Thus he pro- si
mised (Levit, 25, 21,) Then I will Command my blessing upon you no

as nuch in one year as may serve for two of three. Thus he pro- Sive ad Bemised (Levit. 25. 21.) Then I will Command my blessing upon you nignitatem,
in the fixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years; the secure beingne
fixth year was the year before the Sabbath-year, for then they necessitatem, us
were not to till the ground; Now if you carefully observe my cum pluvia
Sabbath-year (saith God) you shall have no want, though you do descendit sumnot sow. This is a mercy, when God sends in a double or treble mo assu adaeCrop, when he not only sends enough to serve the turn or to keep rem refrigeranus alive, but abundance and plenty, so that the stoars shall be full of
wheat, and the fats shall overshow with wine and oy'e, as the promise
is expressed, Feel 2, 24.

Hence

Hence note;
God is not only a just, but a bountiful Masten;

He doth not only give us enough for necessity, but for desight and contentment; if we use his bounty well, and turn not his blessings to his dithonour, plenty will be our mercy. The Clouds come sometimes for Correction, God sweepes away even our necessaries, by raines, which are therefore in Scripture called sweeping raines; at ether times the Clouds come for mercy, and empty themselves to fill us with the blessings of the earth; that, we both by corrections and savours may be led to repentance, and receive further mercy, not only mercy from the Clouds, but mercy above the Clouds. Thus the words stand in a fair opposition, and one part of the verse illustrates the other.

Yet I conceive there is somwhat further in these words, for mercy, or in mercy and free benignity; which may intimate thus

much to us,

That even the Rain from the Clouds, and fruits of the earth, are not given us of desert, but of free fuvour and mercy.

They come for mercy, or as a mercy. God doth not feed World because he owes them any thing, but because he is mercifull; we do not oblige him to give us a drop of rain, or a morfelf of bread; sweet showres from Heaven, and plentifull harvests on Earth, are acts of grace, mercy, favour, and good-will unto man. God payeth men wages in nothing but in punishment, when God punisheth, he payes wages, that which is deserved; if God send the Clouds for Correction, we have what our fins have procured and brought up on us; but if he fend plenty, we have mercy, a gracious bounty or largels from the hand of God; our daily bread is not pay nor wages, but reward and mercy, much leffe is that which is more or beyond our daily bread. We by fin deferve that the Heavens should be (as the Lord threaten'd his ancient people in case of disobedience) as brass, and the Earth as iron; but we have not deferv'd that the Heavens should drop fatness, and the Earth yeild her increase; this is mercy. Not only are we to look upon the Pardon of fin as a mercy, and Redemption by the blood of Christ as a mercy, and Justification through his Righteoutness as mercy, and eternall life as a mercy, or coming from mercy,

mercy and free grace; but we are to receive every bit of bread as coming to us through mercy, freely, and not upon any account of our own workings or defervings. And if we cannot deferve a showre, no nor a drop of rain from the Clouds, if we cannot deferve a Crop of Corn from the Earth, then surely we cannot deferve grace or peace from God, or eternal life and happiness with God.

Therefore how should we magnifie and admire the mercy and free grace of God for spiritual things, when we see such cause of magnifying him, even for temporal good things! if the Clouds

are favourable to us, it is of mercy.

Further, That notion may be well improv'd, which some give of this word, reading the Abstract by the Concrete; we say, For mercy, they say for the mercifull, that is, for the liberall, benigne, and mercifull man, the man of a large heart to do good : God causeth the Cloud to come somtimes for Correction, usually for his land, to conveigh common comforts, and he hath his times wherein he causethir to come for the merciful, that is, in special favour to those that are mercifull, and good, and gracious, both as they have received grace from God, and as they have done good things for and among men : He that watereth, shall be watered also himself, (Pro. 11. 24.) Thus you see the three-fold Message that God sends the Clouds upon, either to Correct men for their fin, or for his Land, that the Creature in general may have subfistence, or for special favour and mercy to his peculiar people, and for those above the rest, of good men, who are mercifull and ready to do good.

J O B, Chap. 37. Vers. 14, 15, 16.

14. Hearkenunto this, O Job, stand still and confider the wondrows works of God.

15. Dost then know when God disposed them and

caused the light of his cloud to shine?

10. Dost thou know the ballancings of the clouds, the wonderous works of him which is perfect in know-ledge?

This context begins the second part of the Chapter, wherein

First, exciteth Job to a serious contemplation of the wonderful

works of God; this is expressed in the 14th verse.

Secondly, He urgeth the weakness and inability of Job, and indeed of any man, to understand the sull compass of those works: And this he doth

First, In general, as to them all, in the beginning of the 15th

verse, Dost thouknow when God disposed them?

Secondly, he shewesh his inability as to particulars, or the several kinds of the works of God:

First, As to his canfing of the Light to shine, in the chose of the

Secondly, As to his weighing or ballancing of the Clouds, verse

16th.

The summe of these three verses, together with the two next which follow, make up an earnest exhortation, that Job considering, and comparing that great power and wildom of God, which appear & shine in those forementioned works, with his own weakness and insufficiency, would therefore humble himself, and not yenture any surther to contest or plead with God.

And because many of the Lords providential works are unfearchable, as well as these which are natural, therefore Elibu would not have Job busic himself in any curious prying into those which concerned his present condition. For, if there be infinite and unerting wildow removered with mercy, and justice with goodness, in all the outward dispensations of God, ordering the motions and

Mete-

Meteors of the Heavens, the Clouds, the Rain, the Snow and Hail, the Lightning and the Thunder; then furely Joh ought to fat down convinced, that there is a like temperament of equity with feverity, and of goodness with sharpnesse in all his dealings with men, and was with him in particular. That's the scope and purpose of Elihu all along, in reading Joh this Philosophical Lecture, or in putting Questions to him about the things of Nature, and the regiment of God in these inseriour heavens, the Air, where all things seem to move without rule, or by no rule other than what Nature alone imposeth.

Vers. 14. Hearken unto this, O Job.

We have more than once met with this awakening exhostation, which calleth for such an harkening, as if a man were to be all ear in attending what is spoken. We may well render it, Ear this, O Tob, take it, drink it in at thine ear; Hearken

Unto this ;

Elibu doth not exhort him to attention in general, but draws it down to some special matter, Hearken unto this, O Job. Which

words may have a double reference, either

First, to what he had said before (vers. 13th) telling him how God sends the Rain and causeth the Cloud to come, either for correction, or for his land, or for mercy; Hearken unto this, O Job, here's a lesson for thee, remember it well, God sends forth these servants of his, the Clouds to do his work, either for correction or for mercy, either in savour or in judgment; Hearken unto this, O Job: Or,

Secondly, The words may refer to that which followeth, and so, as one calls them, they are an Exordium, a brief Exordium, or short preface to what Elibu had surther to say; as if he would a little relieve the spirits and quicken the attention of Job, by acquainting him, that he had some new matter to say before him. As if he had said, I have not yet uttered all my mind, I have somewhat more upon my heart, which I cannot hold in, both for thy conviction and instruction; Hearken unto this, O Job.

Yet it may be questioned, why Eliha should thus stir up his actention, either to consider what he had spoken, or what he was now about to speak? Was Joba heedless, an un-attentive hear-

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er? We may conceive he was occasioned to give him this spur, or excitation, for these three reasons, or at least some of them.

First, We may suppose, that fob having been entertained with a long discourse, began to grow weary and stacken his attention, and therefore, as when we see one in a congregation remisse in hearing, or sleeping out a weighty point, we jog him, or say, Hearken to this; so Eliha here.

Hence note, First;

A good hearer of the Word, may sometimes want an awakening word.

He that is not (as fob was not) a first, not second, nor thirdground-hearer, but (as fob was) a fourth-ground-hearer, one that heareth with a good and honest hearr, yer, even he may a little let down his watch, and give just occasion to the speaker for such a short diversion as Elihu here used, Hearken (I pray) to this. There is a willingness of spirit in all fourth-ground, or right-hearted heavers, yet, there is also, even in them, a weakness of the flesh; corruption may be stirring, temptation may be working, therefore cis no unnecessary jealousie in the Ministers of the Gospel, sometimes to mingle or interweave such passages as these, in speaking rothem, pray hearken, stir up and awaken your selves: There may be need of this (I say) where there is a general good bent of heart. Some pretending hearers are like the Idols of the heathen, who have eyes and see not, eares and hear not; who, when they are hearing, fer themselves, at least give way, to sleep, and willingly yeeld to the drowliness of their spirits; this sheweth an evil heart: but a good man may be overtaken with drowfinesse, and find much indisposition to duty, while he is in duty, and then he will count it a favour, to hear fuch a word as this cast in, Pray bearken.

Secondly, Elibs might afresh provoke him to more serious attention, because the matter he had to deliver, was of more importance, or did more nearly concern him, than what he had said be-

fore.

Hence note; Though the whole truth of God is to be attended to, yet there are some truths that call for special attention.

Here

Here is an accent put upon the point in hand, Hearken to this. We should not let any truth fall to the ground, truth is precious. quite through, and we may fay of truth as of gold, the very filings of it are precious. We save the least dust of Gold, every grain of it is of worth, and so is every grain, or the least dust of divine truth. One jot, one tiable of the Law (faith Christ, Mat. 5. 18.) shall in no wife paffe till all be fulfilled; Surely then, no jor, no tittle of it should be lightly passed by, by us. Yet there are some divine truth like studs of massie gold, or as jewels, which ought to be more carefully accended to, and laid up in the cabinet of the heart; Some truths have an emphasis, a Selah set upon them, O hearken to thefe. Christ faith in the Go pel, about the tything of mint, annise and cummin, These things ye ought to do, but he sure ye do not leave the weightier matters of the Law, Indoment, Mercy and Faith undone (Matth. 23 23.) fo fay I, attend to the least truths, but be fure ye attend to fundamental truths, to those truths upon which the whole weight of the foul stands; Such is, The great Mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the flesh; and the great Grace of Faith in that Mystery: These, with several others, are the fundamentals, the very vitalls of Religion; all falls and dies, unlesse ye stand fast and live in these : O hearken unto

Thirdly, Elibu may be conceived to freak thus to Job, because he saw him about to interrupt him; possibly he might perceive a little passion stirring in him, therefore, not only to keep up his attention, or to wind up his watch, but to repress and keep down some stormy troubled motions rising in his spirit, Elibu made this short interlocution or digression, Hearken to this, O Job, suffer me

to freak out, do not take me off, I have not yet done.

Hence note; Patience is necessary in a good hearer;

And that not only for the doing what is heard, but for the hearing of it. As we can never bring forth the fruit of that which we hear without patience, so neither can we without patience hear that which should make us fruitful. The great grace to be exercised in hearing the Word, is Faith; yet we have need of Patience in hearing the Word, and that in a double respect.

First, We have need of Patience, as to continuance in hearing.

fome would fain have done presently, they cannot fit it out, an hour is an gear to them, the word is a weariness to them, they

toon think they have enough.

Secondly, There is need of patience for submission to what is heard. How short soever the Sermon is, yet when it pincheth the conscience and pricketh the heart, it is not easily born. They who hear quietly some words of truth, will not endure some other; we hardly continue hearing with any patience, when to us, the word heard, is a hard faying, and bares hard upon either, our consciences or our practises; when the finger is, as it were, laid upon, and presseth the sore, few can endure it. 'Tis easie to hear pleasing things, but that which crosseth our spirits or our wayes calls for patience. When Stephen, the Proto-martyr, preached to the Tews, and brought the word home to their consciences, by that close application (Asts 7.51.) Te stiff necked and uncircumcised in heart and ear, ye do alwayes resist the Holy Ghost; as your Fathers did, so do ye. At this word, or, when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart (saith the text) and they gnashed on them with their teeth; their patience was quite spent, they could hear no longer. And when Sr. Paul spake to that great Assembly (Alts 22. 1,-22, 23.) They gave him audience unto this word (I will send thee to the Gentiles) and then lift up their voices and faid, away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he (hould live: Then they cryed out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust in the air. Thus they raved and were enraged, like angry, yea like mad dogs, when once their title was questioned, or (as we speak) their coppy-hold toucht, by the mention of the Gentiles, whom they greatly despised, and judged themselves so much above. Hearken to this, to this pinching word, to the word that firikes upon your lusts. The length of a Sermon spoiles the patience of some, but the strength and searching power of it, spoiles the patience of more. A fincere heart is willing to hear all, and is most pleated to hear that word, which gives deepest wounds to any corruption of heart or transgression of life. Such words are wholsome, though bitter or sharp, and the more they make us smarr, the more medicinal and healing they are. Hearken unto this, O fob,

Stor, sc. per ments relitudinem. Aquin.

Stand still and consider the wonderous works of God.

Elihunot only desires Job to hearken, but to stand still and consider. There There is a twofold flanding fill.

First, Bodily. I do not conceive Elihn imposing any such geflure or composure upon Job, as to fland fill and not this nis body. The Hibrew is but one word, stand up. There is a liberty as to any comly gesture of the body in hearing; a man may lawfully sit as-well as stand and hear, yet to stand up and hear, sheweth a readinesse of the mind, and a hungring desire after the Word.

Secondly, There is a standing still of the mind. The body may stand as still as a stake or stone, while the mind is in strong motion, yea, while there are most vehement commotions and perturbations in the mind. This still-standing of the mind in hearing

what is spoken may be taken in a double opposition.

First, To any imparience, unquierness or uncomposedness of

the mind when the word is spoken.

Secondly, To any irreverence, flighting or difregarding of the word spoken. To stand still is to get the spirit quiet, to hear patiently; or to stand still is to get the heart into a reverential frame, to hear affectionately. So then, to stand still implieth both patience and reverence. We have like admonitions in the 30th chapter of this book (werf. 20.) and chapter 32d (verf. 16.) Yea, that admonition of Balaam was of like sence with this (Num. 23.18.) Rife up Balak, and bear. When Balaam was about to deliver his parable, and declare the mind of God concerning Ifrael, he called upon Balak to rise and stand up, that is, to entertain the message with respect. Hearken unto this, O Job, stand still.

> Hance note ; We ought to be in a gracious quietness and composure of spirit when we are called to bear and mind what God bath done or spoken.

Further, We ought to have a quiet, sedate, composed spirit, nor only when we hear doctrinal truths delivered from the word of God, but also when we hear of the providences and various works of God. As this word, stand still, may refer to the words going before, Hearken unto this, so to those which follow, Consider the wonderful works of God: And then the duty required in them reaches both his Word and Works. It is a great power of grace which causeth the heart to stand still in this sence, that is, to

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gere.

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be in a quiet frame when the works of God trouble us or are troublesome to us. Thus M ses bespake the Israelites (Exod. 14.12.) Stand still, and see the salvation of God. It was a very toublesome time with the Israelites, they were ready to give themselves and all they had for lost, when Mifes exhorted them to stand still. Nothing but faith in God can make us fland flill when we are ready to fall, and that will certainly do it. Unbelief makes the heart as unquiet as theirs was upon the report of a war against Judah (Ifa. 7.2.) And his heart (that is, the heart of Ahaz) was moved, and the heart of his people as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind. 'I is hard travel of foul to stand still and see the salvation of God, when every thing seen threatens deflation. The Lord is represented requiring us to do so (Pfal. 46. 10.) Be still, and know that I am God. When the Pfalmist had fioken of the desolating works of God, he added this word from the Lord, be still; as if he had said, the Lord commandeth you to be of a quiet and composed spirit, when all things seem to be in a hurry or consusion; for, he had said before (vers. 8.) Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth! Yet even now (saith the Lord) Be still, and know that I am God. David at the beginning of the Pfalm had professed a firm purpose in himself and in all the faithful with him, for such a still-Aanding, how-ever things movedor matters should go, yea, tumble in this world (vers. 1, 2.) Though the earth be moved, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the lea, though the waters thereofroar, &c. We will not fear, God is our refuge and frength. How comely is it for man thus to stand still in a filent and believing confideration of what God hath done or is doing; to which Elibu called fob expresly, in the next words, stand still;

Consider the wonderous works of God.

Here is, First, Consideration.

Secondly, Confideration of the works of God.

Thirdly, Confideration of the wonderous works of God.

To confider, is the special work of the Understanding, or of the intellectual Powers. To consider, is the most proper work of a rational creature. It is no easie matter to consider our felves, what we are, and what we have done, or what we are doing (Hag. 1.7.) Consider your wayes: But 'tis a harder matter to

con-

consider God, as good in his being and nature, and as good in his workings & operations. That's the butiness of this text, Consider the wonderous works of God; consider them in the sullness of them, and consider them fully. In which sence the Prophet reproves the Jews for their non-consideration, Israel doth net know, my people do not consider (Isa. 1.3.) They do not consider what I have done, nor what I am doing; they are an inconsiderate and regardless people, and therefore a people not to be regarded. There's nothing worth the taking notice of in a people or person, who take no notice of the works of God. They who will not consider his doings will quickly be inconsiderable, and of no account with him. Consider the wonderful works of God.

Consideration is opposed to two things;

First, To flightness of Spirit, or the light passing over of whar

we hear or fee.

Secondly, to unquierness and passionates of spirit, because of what we hear or see. Some lightly pass things by, others think of the works of God in a passion, or with a kind of rage; they are rather vexing themselves about the wonderous works of God, than considering them. Consideration is a work that stands between these two extreams, sightnesse and unquietnesse of spirit. Consideration requires a serious soul, and it right, it makes the soul patient. They who once consider the works of God rightly, will rest in them satisfiedly. Consider the wonderful works of God.

Elihu was speaking of those works of God in the Air, the Meteors, Clouds and Rain, &c. as under the rule of his providence;

now faith he, Confider

The wonderful works of God.

This informs us, that the works of God are very confiderable.

First, In natural things; that is, what God doth in disposing the

course of nature, must be duely considered by man.

Secondly, In civil things, that is, in what he doth in ordering the affaires of men; and these either publick in Nations, or private in Families: In all these God hath his workings, and his works in all must be considered.

Thirdly, In spiritual things, what he doth in wayes of grace upon the souls of men, in convincing and converting them, in hum-Yyy bling and comforting them, which are his choicest and most excellent works of all. Now, though all these works of God are to be considered, the last especially; yet the workes of God here set before Job, are those in Nature, and the providential disposure of them: these are no small matters; Elihu calls them, and so they are, wonderful;

Consider the wonderful works of God.

These works of God in and about natural things, may be distributed into those that are common and ordinary, or those that are rare and extraordinary. Elibu is not treating here about the rare, extraordinary works of God, but about the common and ordinary works of God in the Clouds, the Rain and Winds, &c. yet he calls them wonderful; Consider (saith he) the wonderful works of God.

From the connexion, in that Elihu bids Job stand still, and then

confider the wonderful works of God;

Observe, First;
We can never consider things aright, till our minds come to
a rest and are quiet.

We cannot make a true use of our reason, when we are much moved with passion; we must stand still before we can consider. Moses, when the bush bu ned and did not consume, said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt, (Exod. 3.3.) He went near and stood, considering that wonderful work of God; He was not in a fright, he was not scared to see a burning bush, but he stood in a well composed frame of mind, to consider what his eyes beheld, or the meaning of that strange sight.

Secondly, Note;
The works of God are matter of great consideration.

As the word of God is to be considered, so his works, and mone can profitably consider the word of God, unless they consider the works of God too; His works are a Comment upon his word, the word of God is exemplified in his works; what God speaketh that he doth. We may find the word of God transc ibed in his works, I (faith David, Pial. 77. 12.) will meditate also of all

all thy works, and talke of thy doings. The Character given of a godly man (Pfal. 1. 2.) is, He meditates in the Law of God night and day; and (Pfal. 119. 148) M ne eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word. Now it agodly man thould meditate the word, so the works of God night and day. David was resolved to do so in the place before-mentioned; as also (Pfal. 143. 5.) I (saith he) remember the dayes of da, I meditate on all thy works: I muse on the work of thy hands. Did we rightly consider the works of God, how just, how good they are, we would be more in doing good works, and we thould do ou good works better. If any ask, How are we to consider the works of God? I answer,

First, Consider them in their number, that they are many. The wondestull works of God are innumerable; he doth not only one, not only two or three, but many, very many wonderfull works: Many, O Lind my God (faith David, Pial, 40. 5.) are the won-

derfull works which thou haft done.

Secondly, Confider the wonderfull works of God in their kinds or forts, works of Creation, or works of Providence. The works of God in Providence are very various; His works in the Heavens, & his works on the Earth, his works of judgment, and his works of mercy his works of patience, & his works of vengeance, his works in delivering us from evill, and his works for the continuance of our good, a every various; and tis our duty to confider them all. Whatfoever or how lover God is pleafed to work, the thoughts of man thould work upon it, and give him the

glory of it.

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Thirdly, The works of God are to be considered, as in their number and kinds or sorts, so in their circumstances. As we are to consider our sine, not only in their kind, but circumstances, which exceedingly aggravate and heighten sin; so circumstances in the works of God must be considered, for they exceedingly heighten the works of God: As the circumstances of a sin may make a sin, little for the matter, very great and exceeding sinfull; so a circumstance in any work of God snay make it (though little in it self) great and wonderfull. We leave out the very thrength of a work of me cy, when we pusse by the circumstances of it: A work of me cy done in such a time, in such a way, a work done for such a people, for a people so undeserving, renders the work much

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more

more considerable, and valuable. The Lord (saith David, Psal. 111.

4.) hath made his wonderfull works to be remembred. The old translation saith, The mercifull and gracious Lord hath so done his marveilous works, that puts a so upon his works, he hath not only done them, but, he hath done them so, in such a way, with such circumstances, he hath put such marks, such accents upon them, that they are to be remembred, that they cannot but be remembred. It is but an half consideration of the works of God, to consider them abstractly and nakedly, without their cloathings, that is, their circumstances of time, place, persons, when, where, how, for whom, and by whom they were done.

Fourthly, We should consider the works of God, in their aims, ends, and tendencies; not only what they are, but what they lead to, what the purpose of God may be in them, with respect to our selves, with respect to the Church, with respect to the world, is very considerable. There is not a drop of rain that falls from Heaven, but it bath a purpose in it, and that not only to feed and nourish man by making the earth fruitfull, but to make our

hearts and lives fruitfull.

Or thus, We are to consider the works of God in their aimes, First, as to God, to set forth his power, wiscome, goodness. Secondly, as to man; First, to draw man nearer to God; Secondly, to raise him up in thankfulness; Thirdly, in holiness and conformity to the will of God. Now, if this be to consider the works of

God, then we may inferre;

Though there be many who see the works of God, yet there are but sew who consider them. It is an easie thing to see the works of God, that's only eye-work, but to consider them is difficult, that's head-work and heart-work too. Though I conceive, that word tendred to see, is sometimes used in the sence of this Text, for confideration (Isa. 26. 11.) When thy hand is lifted up they will not see. They could not choose but see with their eyes, that such things were done, but they did not see, or rather would not see, as seeing notes considering, the hand and aime of God in doing them: They who have no mind to answer and submit to, to profit by, and conforme to the works of God, have no care, nor will they take the pains, to get such a sight of them. So that while most see the works of God ocularly, while they see the outside, the bulke and body of them, they see not the works of God spiritually,

no nor so much as rationally. Tis not a glance of the eye, but the study of the min, which is required in seeing the works of God. And hence it is that though there are store of spectators and talkers of the works of God, yet there are sew considerers of them. Every one almost will be speaking of the great things which God doth, saying, What do you hear? or do you not hear what is done, what is come to passe? but where is the consideration of what is done, or of what hath passed? who stayeth his thoughts, and breathes wisely upon the works of God? They are wise indeed who do so, as David concluded, after a long and most excellent discourse of the works of God, (Pfal. 107.43.) Who is wise and will observe these things (as if he had said, None but the wise will not can observe them) even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord.

Thirdly, What are those works which Elibu here calls the wonderfull works of God? Surely those described both in the foregoing and subsequent part of this Chapter are (which are no prodigies in Nature) the Winds, Rain, Frost, Snow, Thunder and Lightning: These are the matter of his discourse, and of these

he saith Consider the wonderfull works of God.

Hence observe; The common, constant, and ordinary works of God, are full of wonders.

Though we rightly distinguish the works of God (as was touched before) into ordinary and extraordinary, common and wonderfull, yet did we fully understand them, there is a kind of wonder and miraculousness in all the works of God, even in his most common, ordinary, or every dayes works. What is more ordinary and common than the generation and formation of mar, tet (saith David, Pial. 139. 15.) I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marveiless are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. And the reason why we do not look out the wonders of that and of many other common works of God, is, because they are so common. The very falling of the Rain hath a wonder in it, the blowing of the Wind hath a wonder in it, the motion of the Clouds hath a wonder in it, the growing of every spire of grass out of the earth hath a wonder it it, the budding out of every leaf and blossom on the tree hath a wonder in it; yet be-

Magnitudine revum confuetudo subducit: La enim compositi sunter. am. Sen: 1, 7. €. II.

Sol Spellatobet ; nemo ob. nisi laborantem.

cause these things are common, we do not think nor call them wonderfull. Every one would think i a wonder to see a dry rod, a rod cut off from the tree, bloffom, s Aarons did (Namb. 17.8.) but who thinks it a wonder, to see a tree well rooted in the earth bloffom every Spring? yet there is a wonder, a wonderfull work of God in that alio. A Heathen Philosopher could say from his own observation of things and persons, Custom takes away admiration. Such is the genius or spirit of mankind, that we never admire what we often see or meet with, though in it felf it be never so ut nos, quaridt admirable. Who admires the motion of the Sun every day? yet au etiarifiad- the Suns mo ion every day is as miraculous and flurendious, as its miratione dig- standing still was in that day of Joshua's battel with the Kings, or as its retrograde motion or going back was in that day of King Nat: qual: Hezekiah's recovery from a mortal difeate. That fuch a vast body as the Sun, should take and sulfill such a journey, should pais such an unconceivable space in twenty-four houres, is an amazing wonder, yet no man wonders at it. It hath been faid, The Sun and vens, nisi cum Moon have hardly any beholders (they can scarcely get a look from us) unless when Eclipsed, and then all men stand gazing and fervat lunam, wondering at them, every one will be looking towards them with hands lifted up, & fay, O strange! yet the Eclipses of the Sun & Moon are far easier to the conceptions of Reason, than the motion of the Sun and Moon is, confidering the vast course they run and performe every day. We admire things our of course, or when their course is diffurbed, yet the constant course of things is much more admirable; every time the Sun rifeth, every time the rain falleth, every time the wind bloweth, every time the tyde turneth, we have a wonderfull work of God presented to our contemplation. Though Aftronomers and Philosophers have spoken much of the reason or cause of these things, yet they cannot reach the bottom of them. The Stoicks differ from the Peripateticks, each having probable and plausible arguments for their opinion about natural! things; yet none of them hir the matter fully, because there is a wonderfulness in them which God is pleased to hide from man, as also because they were not at all guided by a divine Light in the disquisition of them, but meerly by humane reason and naturall understanding.

Let this be remember'd, The ordinary works of God have wonders in them. I shall conclude this poynt with paralelling the

extraor-

extraordinary and ordinary works of God, as to the realt wonderfulness of them, by two Scripture miracles. The shopping of the fire from burning the three Children, was a wonderfull work of God; so also is the making of such a creature as burning Fire, yet who wonders at it? It was a wonderfull work of God to stop the mouthes of those hungry Lyons from devouring Daniel; so also is the making of a devouring Lyon, yet who wonders at it? Now, seeing there are wonders even in the ordinary works of God,

We may take much comfort in our straits, for 'tis no hard matter with God to work wonders; he works some for us every day, they are his daily works. If we need a miracle to save us in an eminent danger, God can do it; when we see no means in the world to produce such an essect, yet we are never the surther from it. Gods ordinary works are full of wonder; He doth the, hardest things with as much ease, as those which we call and count the easest.

Elibs having thus awakened the attention of Job, and called him in generall to that internal work of confideration about the external works of God, he (I fay) having done this, descends to particulars in the next verse, and those which follow.

Vers. 15. Doest thou know when God disposed them, and caused the light of his Cloud to shine?

Here Eliha begins to come upon Job thick and three-fold (as we fay) with his questions, he puts him many questions, and hard ones; and so doth God also, Chapter 38th, 39th, and 40th. And as here Eliha, so there God poseth or examineth Job in the things of Nature. If we look from this verse to the end of Gods discourse with Job, we may find this question, Doest thou know? put more than twenty times to Job. But why are these posing questions put so often? I answer, to humble Job and silence him from questioning the dealings of God with him; why did God alter my condition? why have I been thus afflicted? why emptied from vessel to vessel, said Job? I would saine know the reason of my sufferings. Well, saith God, answer my questions first; I would know this or that of thee; and so saith Eliha in the behalfe of God,

Doest thou know when God disposed them?

The word rendred dispose, fignisheth to order, direct, appoynt, respance, deand cornere.

and determine; to dispose is all these. Doest thou know when God disposed

them?

What? Some refer the them, to all that had been spoken of before, to the Clouds, the Rain, the Thunder, the Lightning, the Light; Doest thou know when God did order the Clouds to Thunder and Rain, or the Sun to thine? As if he had faid, God disposed of these without asking thy advise; did he acquaint thee with the orders he sent to the Clouds, or with the commands which he gave to the Lightning and the Thunder? Canst thou tell when God will work, or what he will work in the Clouds? He may be making preparation for faire weather or foule weather there, and thou never the wifer, but altogether uncertain of what he is about. Thus he humbleth Tob, & labours to take him off from his murmurings and complainings, as also from over-bold queryings and questionings about the providential wo kings of God with, and towards him, by bringing him under a full conviction of his great inability to understand or comprehend the natural works of God, or when God set the Law and gave the Rule to or about these things; Doest thou know when God disposed them?

Hence Note:

First, God did not only make the world, and all the furniture of it, but he disposeth the motions of every creature in it:

All things move as they are influenced by his power, and directed by his wisdome. The date of Gods order for disposing the creature is from the beginning, yea from everlasting. As the model of the Creation, what things should be, was with him from everlasting, so was the model of Providence, how all things should be governed and disposed of. The government of the world is as much of God as the Creation of giving of it a being. From the Starrs in Heaven, to the Wormes creeping upon the Earth, all creatures were and are guided in their course by him; he hash fet them bounds which they cannot passe, and sent out his word to them which they faile not to observe. Heathens, generally, did not acknowledge God to be the Maker of the world, nor did they acknowledge him the disposer of it, but ascribed all the vicissitudes here below to blind Fortune, or to uncertain Chance

Chap. 37.

Chance. Aristotle, the fore-man, the wifest of that rank, thought the World was eternal; he could not find how it had a beginning, and therefore concluded it had none : yet others of the wife Heathen had a notion that there was a beginning, that there was a first-worker, but when or how he wrought they could not rell. And as the wifest men, who had but the light of nature and reafon to teach them, were very dark about the beginning of all things, to also about their motion, they thought that all things either moved of themselves, or that the supream Power having put Nature into a course, it acted alone, so that God never medled about particulars. Whereas we are taught and affured, by this Scripture-Text, and many more, that God not only made all things, but disposeth all things, even to the fall of a Sparrow upon the ground, or to the loss of an hair of the head (Math. 10. 20.) Christ saith also (John 5.17.) My father worketh hitherto, and I work. Creation was a work ended in fix dayes, but Providence is a work that never ends; thus God alwayes worketh, though al-

wayes at rest. That's the lesson here intended. It may be matter of much comfort to us, that all things are ordered by God, that he disposeth of Thunder and Lightning, of Rain and Wind, of Snow and Frost; much more may it comfort us, that he disposeth the affaires of men, of his Church and People. Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world (Acts 15.18.) and therefore the Prophet brings in the Lord thus speaking of himself (Isa. 46.9, 10.) I am God and there is none elfe, I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. He that knoweth what the end of all things will be, must needs dispose of all second causes, and intermediate acts leading thereunto. The reason why men often mis-reckon and faile of their expectation about the ends and illues of things, is, because they have not all the means in their power, yea, I may fay, they have not any of the means fully, no nor at all in their own power. The way of man is not in himself, how then can his ends be? only God knoweth what shall be the conclusion, because he hath the full disposure of all the premises, means, and wayes, by which the conclusion is brought about. Let us adore and consider the power of God, as well in disposing of the creature, as in making of it.

Z z z

Agair,

Again, Doeft thou know ? &c.

Surely thou does not. The question here, as often elsewhere, carrieth in it a strong denial.

Hence Note; Men know little of the works and wayes of God.

Some men are called knowing, and others ignorant, but all men are deficient in their knowledge both of the nature and works of God. Drest thou know? But was Job some ignorant simple perfon? Surely no, Job was one of the wifest as well as greatest men of that age, he was as well versed as any in the study and knowledge both of natural and spiritual things; Nor is he charged by Elihu here with ignorance simply, but with ignorance as to this, this was too high and too hard for him. We may with reverence enough question their knowledge in some things, who are very know-

intenen in most things.

There are some things which 'cis a shame for a man not to know. The Apostle speaks often in that language (Rom. 2. 4.) Desp sest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and longfuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? What a shame is it that any who know any thing should not know and understand the scope of the mercy of God to sinners; What! knowest thou not, that forbearance leads to repencance? Again, the same Apostle in the same Epistle puts the like upbrayding question (Rom. 7. 1.) Know ye not (for I speak to them that know the Law) how that the Law hath dominion over a man as long as he liverb. He is not worthy to be reckened as a piece of mankind, who is altogether unknowing; no is he worthy to be reckoned among the men of his profession, who knows not the common principles of it. While the Apostle spake to those who knew the Law; he presumed they were not ignorant of that Rule in Law, that the Law which hath or should have dominion over all men living, hath no dominion over any man beyond this life. Now (I lay) as it is a shame for any man not to know those things which are required of him, and specially concern him, so 'tis a prefumption for any man to feek the knowledge of those things which are purposely reserved and hidden from him, (Deut. 29. 29.) Scoret things belong to God, revealed things to us and to our children.

children. Christ saith of the latter day, of the day of Judgment. (Math. 24. 36.) Of that day and houre knoweth no man, no not the Angels of Heaven, but my Father only: and he reproved the curiofity of his Apostles immediately before his ascension, for enquiring after that kind of knowledge (Alts 1. 7.) It is not for you to know the times or the scasons which the Father hath put in his own power. As it is not profitable, so not lawfull for us to look after the knowledge of those things, which God hath lockt up and kept secret. Let us take heed we be neither found unknowing in those things which it is a shame for us not to know, nor curioufly prying into the knowledge of those things' which are rettrained from our knowledge. But (to the prefent poynt) is may be much matter of humiliation to us, that of those things which we have a liberty, and 'tis our duty to know, we know to little. Tob had free liberty to know, and fearch after the knowledge of those things about which Elihu put his questions, the Mereors of the air, and the motions of those superiour bodyes; yet Eliba knew he could say little in answer to these questions, when he asked him, Doeft thou know? &c. And therefore his purpose was to humble Feb, while he made him see and know his own ignorance. And did the most knowing man in the world know his own ignorance, that would (I am fure it might) make him very humble. We are apt to be very proud of a very small portion of knowledge, a little puffs us up; whereas the sence of our defects in knowledge may both make and keep us little in our own eyes: We should be thankfull for that little which we know, and humble because we know so little.

Eliku having by the Question now opened, convinced Job in in general that he knew but little of the works of God, proceeds in the close of this verse, and surther forwards, to convince him surther of his desectiveness in knowledge, by putting the same question about many other particulars: And the first particular about which he puts the same question, is the Light of the Cloud; Doest thou know when God disposed them,

And caused the light of his Cloud to shine?

He questions Job again about another poynt, the weighing the Clouds (v. 16.) Doest then know the ballancing of the Clouds, the wonderfull works of him that is perfect in knowledge? As if he 'Z z z 2 had

had said, Gods causing the light of his Cloud to shine, and his ballancing the Clouds, are wonderfull works, even the wonderfull works of him who is perfect in knowledge; and tell me Job, Doest thouk now these things? Doest thou know when God disposed them,

And caused the light of his Cloud to shine?

We must here repeat the former question; and, Doest them know when God caused the light of his Cloud to shine? yea, tome read this latter part of the verse in dependance upon the former; Doest thou know when God dispised them, that he might cause the light of his Cloud to shine? But I rather take it as a distinct Question. In which, consider, he doth not say, That he may cause the light of his Sun, but of his Cloud, to shine. Tis the Sun properly that shineth, Clouds do not: The Sun is the Candle of the World, the receptacle and vessel of light. Clouds are but vessels or receptacles of water, they are not properly diaphanous, but opacous, or grosse, thick bodyes: How then is it here said, He causeth the light of his Cloud to shine? I answer, The Cloud doth not shine by any connatural or intrinsick light, but by that which is adventitious, and accidental to it. And,

Splendui inelaruic.

There is more in that word hime, than the ordinary thining of the Sun; the Hebrew root fignifies not only to shine, but to break forth with thining in some very illustrious manner) Den. 33. 2.) The Lord came from Sinai, and refe up from Seire unto them, be shined forth from Mount Paran. Moses carrieth a metaphor or borrowed speech quite through the verse, representing Godas the Sun shining forth and shewing himself to the people of Israel, in three several places, &as it were in as many distinct degrees of glorious manifestation. His glory shined first from Mount Sinai, where he gave the Love. Secondly, from Mount Seir or Edom, where (as I may say) he gave the Gospel, commanding Moses to make a Brazen Serpent, that they who looked on it might be cured of the poylonous wounds given them by the fiery Serpents, (Numb 21.) An illustrious type of Christ (Joh. 3. 14.) Thirdly, the glory of the Lord shined from Mount Paran, where Mofes, by command from the Lord, made repetition of the Law, adding fundry Evangelical explications of it. In all which the Lord thined forth with a glorious brightness, infinitely exceeding that of the Sun. David in three of his Pfalms speaking of the wonderfull

full appearances and discoveries of God, First, to save his people; Secondly, to judge and destroy his enemies, useth this word which here we translate shine, (Pial. 50. 1.) The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken and called the Earth from the rising of the Sun, to the going down of the same; out of Zion the perfection of beauty God hath frined. That beauty with which God shines out of Zion in the divine splender and holiness of his worship and ordinances is very glorious. Again, (Pfal. 80. 1.) Give eare O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock, thou that dwellest between the Cherubims, shine forth; that is, declare thy felf in thy mighty power, as it followeth (verf. 2.) Before Ephraim Benjamin and Manasseh, ferr up thy self, and come and save us . And as the gracious appearances of God for the saving of his people, so likewife the dreadfull appearances of God for the destruction of his enemies, are expressed by this word (Pfal. 94. 1.) O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth, O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, then thy felf: The Hebrew is (and so we put it in the Margin) fkine forth. Thus the word notes no ordinary thining, but thining both with vengeance, and with falvation; which latter falls in well with the Interpretation of the light shining in the Cloud, which I shall open a little further.

And causeth the light of his Cloud to shine.

There are three Interpretations of these words.

First, Some by the light of the Cloud, understand the lightning, which (all know) breaks through the Cloud, and saines out wonderfully before it Thunders. The light of lightning is a won-

derfull light.

Secondly, O hers understand, by the light of his Cloud, the light dignifurm as of the Sun scattering the Cloud, and as it were, tu ning the Cloud es discussa fer into light, making light where none was, or nothing but a thick rentatem investurm.

dark Cloud.

Thirdly, Several learned Interpreters expound the light of his Merc:

It is eff lux in Cloud, by the Rainbow, which is also a very illustrious light, and nube verida et that is eminently the light tof Gods Cloud, 'tis his light in the egregium opus Cloud. We may also call it a light of the Cloud; for though the deix de illa matight of the Sun falleth upon the clouds, yet the light of the Sun at lumin exponether times is not so properly called the light of the Cloud, as the fulguru meanight of the Rainbow is, or as when the light of the Sun, reflecting tionem feccitis.

from Sculte

from or upon the Cloud, causeth that Meteor, which we call the Rainbow; and therefore is emphatically express by this circumlocution, the fining of the light of his Cloud. The thining light of the Rainbow hath in it a great appearance of God, for the holp, alvation, and deliverance of his people, tis a token of the good-will of God to man. And that we should rather expound this place of the Rainbow, than either of the Lightning, or the Sun thine, I shall briefly give these foure Reasons, upon which I ground the Expo-

First, Elibs had spoken of the Lightning and of the Sun-shine in the former parts of his discourse, and therefore it is not probable that he should return to either so soon.

Secondly, In this whole philosophical Lecture of Elibu, wherein he enters into the treasures of these lower Heavens, there is no mention at all of the Rainbow, unless we fix it upon this place; therefore seeing he had spoken of the Lightning and of the Sun-shine, in the former parts of his discourse, and speaks not at all afterward of the Rainbow, it is most probable that he intends it here.

Thirdly, He is speaking of the wonders of God in the Clouds; and surely his discourse would have been imperfect, if he had omitted this, which as some express it, is the most wonderfull of wonderfull things among the Clouds, and one of the great fecrets mum; Nature in Nature; I say he should have omitted a great part of that which belongs to the doctrine of the Meteors (all Meteorological Graci vocant Writers particularly handling this Doctrine of the Rainbow) if it be not found here.

We may take a fourth Reason of this Exposition, because this ab admiratione, light is faid to faine in his Cloud : its true, all Clouds are his cum admirabi- that is, Gods Clouds; but the Cloud in which the Rainbow doth lem figuram in at any time appear, is in a way of peculiarity and higher fignifisere exprimat. cancy called the Cloud of God, or Gods Cloud. All the Clouds are as Gods Bow, out of which he thoots his Acrows and Bolts; they are also called the Seat of God, on them he sitterh as upon his Throne Again, they are called his Chariot, of them he rideth in his Majefly; but the Rainbow-cloud, is, as it were, the Royal Robe or Diadem of God, the special Clothing of God. The Lord saith at the 13th verse of the 9th of Genesis, where we have the first mention of the Rainbow. I do fet my Bow in the Cloud; the Bow is Gods, and

Mirabilium mirabiliffiarcanum. iridem Thanmanties into vo Suvuares

watery.

the Cloud is Gods, he is entitled to them both in a very eminent and special manner. God calleth it his Cloud, and his Bow; Not only, First, because he made the Cloud, & the Sun beams by which the Bow is made. But, Secondly, and chiefly, because he hath put it to a special use, and given it a mystical signification.

And therefore here we may take notice, that whereas the Rainbow is naturally a fign of Rain, for it is alwayes accompanied with Clouds, or at least with a Cloud ready to distolve and melt into Rain; and is therefore called by the Poet (Nuncia Junonis, Virg. Eneid 4.) the Harbingresse of Juno: yet on the contrary God appoynts it as a fign of faire weather. And indeed God often works by contrary means, left we should stick in means, and ascribe the effect, more than is due, to them. So then the Rainbow hath two different fignifications, the first natural, of Rain, nor doth God promise to hinder or alter this course of nature. Secondly, preternatural or instituted, of faire weather; which Philofophy, and the world, is alregether ignorant of; only the Church and people of God understand it by faith upon the testimony or revealed will of God, that as often as the Bow appeareth in the Cloud, they have a renewed affurance that God will remember the Earth, and moderate the Rain: nor doth this depend upon the nature of, or various colours appearing in the Rainbow, but -purely upon the will and inflitution of God. And the efore we ought by a firme faith to embrace the word of promise, to which this sign is annexed; without that, the Rainbow is nothing else to us, but the image or representation of the rayes of the Sun or Moon, impressed upon the Clouds.

I shall not insist upon any large discourse of the Rainbow, only rake two or three things. This Meteor hath three Attributes above the rest; First, it is the most illustrious and beautifult; Secondly, the most desirable and comfortable; Thirdly, the most strange and wonderfull of all the impressions visible in the air. This is properly expressed by a Bow, because the forme of it usually is semicircular. Lather saith he saw a Rainbow in the some of a perfect Circle; and others report they have seen it in the forme of a strait line: But in what-ever form it appears, the natural cause of it is the restection of the Sun or of the Moon (for there are Rainbows in the night as well as in the day) it is caused; I say, by the restriction of the light of the Sun or Moon) upon or from a

est arcus, qui roridim oppositam gignitur. Garcæ.

aris ab eight tery or dewey Cloud opposite to either. The Latine word Iris. J'uod est dicere is derived from a greek word, which fignifieth to speak or to reve loqui. I'm lare forathing: The Rainbow is elegantly so called, because it on reflexione foreshews somtimes rain, somtimes faire weather. A Rainbow luminis, cum fo- in the morning is a fign of showres, in the afternoon it betokens lark tum lung- ferenity, and alwayes it proclaims to us the promife of God for ris, in nubem the moderation of rain; or it speaks thus much to all the world, that God will so measure out the Rain from the Clouds, that it shall never swell to an universal Deluge, or to a drowning of the whole world again. Thus the Rainbow hath a speech, a language of mercy in it towards the present world. It speaks also the luflice of God upon the old world, minding us of that D luge of water that drowned them for their fin; they had so defiled the Earth by their evil manners and prophaness, by their will-worthip, Superflicion and Idolatry, that God in wrath fent a Flood of water, not to walh, or refresh, but to destroy them: The Rainbow minds us of that dreadfull Judgment of God upon a corrupt World. And although the Rainbow gives us affurance that the World shall not be drowned again, how finfull soever it is, yet some, from the various colours of the Rainbow, whereof one is red and fiery, tell us, it proclaims that the World shall at last be consumed by Fire. The Apostle Peter is plain that it shall be so, (2 Ep. 3. 10.) The Elements shall melt with fervent heat; nor is it meerly a phancy, to say, that the fiery colours in the Rainbow are fer there by God, to mind us of it.

Some have questioned whether the Rainbow were before the Flood or no? The reason or ground of the question is given from that faying of God (Gen. 9. 13.) I will fet my Bow in the Cloud: it seems then there was no Rainbow before the Flood.

I answer, The Rainbow may be considered two wayes; First, as to its natural being; Secondly, as to its mystical use. If we confider the Rainbow as to its natural being, it was before the Flood, for the causes of it were before the Flood, which are watery Clouds and the thining of the Sun: Now when sufficient canfes appear in act, the effect doth certainly follow. But as to its mystical use, it was not before the Flood. Water had its natural elementary being and use, before Baptisme was instituted, but it had not a spiritual use till then: we may say the same of the Rainbow. Some I know of the Moderns, Luther and Melanthon affert, opinion, with reverence to those worthy men: For God did not say in the 9th of Genesis, I will make or create my Bow in the Cloud, but, I do set my Bow in the Cloud, and it shall be there for a token of a Covenant between me and the Earth. The Rainbow had no such signification, nor was it set in the Cloud for any such pur-

pose, before that time. So then,

Take the Rainbow as to its mystical use, so I grant, it was not before the Flood; till then God had never caused the light of his Cloud to shine as a Covenant-token. The Rainbow, had alwayes a natural agnification in it, but that is not all, it hath now also a Theological, divine and mystical signification, and is become as the Seal of that Covenant with mankind; for God instituted the Rainbow as a Sacramental fign (fo we may expresse it for our better understanding) both between himself and the whole World in general, and in special between himself & his Covenant people (Gen. 9. v. 12, 13, 14, 15.) It was given (I fay) on purpose to Seal the truth of the Promise, that the whole Earth should no more be overwhelm'd with a Deluge or Flood of water: Which though it be such a promise as the whole Creation hath the benefit of, yet the faithfull only understand the mysterie of it, and have their faith exercised upon it, and strengthened by it. So that while the Rainbow is the fign of a temporal Covenant to all creatures, the godly may look upon it, with reference to all spiritual and eternal mercies by Christ, in whom all the promises of mercy are Yea and Amen, (2 Cor. 1. 20.) And there is a great fitness in it to hold forth mercy both temporal and spiritual, in several particulars.

First, This Rainbow is in the Cloud, and God placed it in the Cloud, because out of the Cloud came the Rain which drowned the old world. God could have drowned the world only by letting out, or breaking up the Springs of water from the earth, but he opened the Cataracts of Heaven also to do it. And therefore God, to secure the world against such another vengeance from

the Clouds, put his Bow in the Cloud.

A second significancy of mercy in the Rainbow, is, because the Bow is bended upwards, or Heaven-ward, the Bow doth not stand bent to the Earth, or downward, the string of the Bow is towards us, not the back of it. He that would shoot hath the bottom or A a a a

back of the Bow in his hand, and the string is towards himself; but God, that he might shew he doth not intend to shoot that Arrow any more, holds the string of the Bow downwards, which no man doth that hath a mind to shoot. The Lord by this Bow in the Cloud shoots no man, unlesse it be (as one well expresseth it) with admiration and love; or I may fay, the Lord having that his Arrowes of immoderate Rain from the Region of the air for mans chastning, seems to return to Heaven with his Bow reversed, as a token of peace and ferenity to the world, or that in Judgment he remembers his Covenant-mercy. The wicked are faid to bend their Bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the apright in heart, (Plal. 11. 2.) But he that turns the string of his Bow downwards, is not ready, nor feems minded to facot at all.

Thirdly, This bow shews mercy, because there is no Arrow

feen ar ir, or with it.

Fourthly, It sheweth or fignifieth mercy, because the Rainquas alimentage; bow infirally appears when Rain is ready to come, implying that nubibus affert. the Rain shall not hurt us; and so we have a support of our faith,

Ovid: 1. Me- as foon as we have any appearance of feare.

Fifthly, When-ever the Rainbow appears, there is clearness in some part of the air; for it cannot be but when the Sun shines. In the time of the Flood the light of the Sun was wholly obscured. All the dayes which the world had during that dreadfull Rain, were (like the day described, foel 2. 2. Zeph. 1. 15.) dayes of darkness, and of gloominess, dayes of Clouds and of thick darkness. Therefore 'tis said, (Gen. 8. 22.) Day and night shall continue for ever : Intimating that in the time of the Flood the day was so obscured, so black, that it could scarcely be known to be day, or diftinguished from night. But now when the Rainbow is seen, the Sun shines, to give affurance that though there be an appearance of Rain, yet the light of the day shall not cease.

Sixthly, The various colours of the Rainbow are very fignifificit colores et cant for our comfort, making (as some Naturalists have told us) warias et pul. a thousand sweet delights for the eye, by the admirable mixtures

and shadowings of colours therein discernable.

Seventhly, The Natu al Historian affurethus, that where the Reinbow ar any time toucherh the Earth (as we may often observe it doth) it leaveth a frag ant finell upon the grafs, fhrubs and bushes.

Concipit ivis a.

Lax in nube Therrimas lusis temperatio-Plin: Natur: Hift: 1. 12.

C. 24

bushes. Thus you see how properly and fitly the Rainbow is called The shiring of the light of his Cloud, as also what significations of favour are discernable in it. From this explication of the words, we may note;

First, After troubles and stormes, God will give his people com-

He causeth the light of his Cloud to fine. Clouds are dark things. but while the Cloud thews Rain, Gods light in the Cloud they faire weather. That's matter of rejoycing to all that fear God as with respect unto that particular Judgment of the Deluge, fo of all evils and troubles which fall upon them in this wo ld. This light shining in the Cloud may comfort and refresh us in the darkett night of forrow. It is faid (Pfal 97. 11.) Light is fowne for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart : And in the 4th of the Revelations (which is as it were a Prologue or Preface to all the Prophesies of the dark times that should come upon the world, and over the Church of God in this world) we find Jesus Christ is represented with a Rainbow about him (vers. 3.) I was in the (pirit, and behold a Throne set in Heaven, and one sat on the Throne, and he that sat was to look upon like a Jasper and Sardix stone, and there was a Rainbow round about the Throne, in fight like to an Emrald. From this Throne it is that Jesus Christ doth, as I may say, dispence all the affaires of his Churches and people. Now though Jesus Christ in the providential or mediatorial government of his Churches, doth often fend Clouds upon them, and though Clouds and darkness are round about him, yet the Throne bath a Rainbow about it: And why a Rainbow? to shew that Jesus Christ is mindfull of his Churches and people, to save them when the Ser-pent casts out Ploods to drown them, 'Tis said (Rev. 12.15.) The Serpent cast out of his mouth water as a Flood after the Weman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the Flood; but Jesus Christ that sitreth upon the Throne, hath a Rainbow about him, which gives affurance that the Floods shall not quite overwhelme the Church, the shall be delivered, though it be in a Wilderness, from those mighty water-floods of persecution raifed and caused by the Serpent and his feed against the feed of the Woman, or against the Woman and her seed. Though Christ may suffer great Floods of sorrow and tribulation to be powred Aaaaa

upon them, yet there is a Rainbow about the Throne to which we may look, and get our faith confirmed, that the Woman and her

Seed shall not be swallowed up.

Take one place more (Rev. 10. 1.) I fam another mighty Angel coming down from heaven (that was Jesus Christ) cloathed with a cloud (that is, with dark dispensations, such as his people should not well know what to make of; but what follows?) and a Rainbow was on his bead. That Prophesie leads into a description of the greatest pressures and troubles that ever the Church of God was to suffer in this world. Jesus Christ was cloathed with a Cloud, but, for the comfort of his Church, there was a Rain-bow on his head, there was light shining in this Cloud, to bear up the spirits of his people, that the mischief should not be to their defiruction, though it might be very much not only to their tryal, but correction. And we find the Church supported, though not directly under this notion of a Rain-bow, yet by a promise plainly hinting, if not referring to it (Isa. 54. 9.) In the 8th verse the Prophet tells us, that the poor Church was in very great trouble; Why? Surely because of some cloudy providences, which interrupted the light of Gods countenance from thining upon them, at least to their apprehension; for thus he b. spake the Church, In a little wrath have I hid my face from thee, for a moment (there was the Cloud) but with everlasting loving kindness will I have mercy on thee, faith the Lord thy Redeemer (there's the Rain-bow) for this is as the waters of Noah; for as I have (worn the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth (which was signified by the Rain bow) fo have I (worn that I will be no more wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee: For the mountains shall depart, and the hills shall be removed, but my kindne's shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed any more, faith the Lord that bath mercy on thee. Then follows, O thou afflicted and to fed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and thy foundations with saphiers, and I will make thy windows of agats, and thy gates of carbuncles. As if he had faid, though I have hid my face yet I wil return, for this is as the waters of Noah; that is, I have as certainly resolved in my self that this unnatural flood shall not drown thee, as I once promised, and am so resolved still, that the natural flood shall never drown the world again; and mark boy he expresseth it, as I have sworne. When we read the history 10

in Genesis, it is not said, that the Lord swore; but the Lord to shew that his word is as good as his oath, tells us that what he spake to Noah, was as if he had sworn it, especially seeing he gave such a sign for the performance of it. I might shew from other Scriptures, that God is sometimes represented swearing, when yet we read of no oath formally given: It is said (Exod. 32. 13.) God sware to Abraham and his Seed; to which the Apostle refers (Heb. 6. 13, 17.) God confirmed it by an oath; yet if we look those scriptures, Gen. 12. 2, 3. Ch. 15.7. Ch. 17. 7. we find only the Lord said, &c. The Lords saying is as good that is, as sure as his swearing, and shall as certainly be performed.

For a conclusion of this matter; let it be remembred, that the Lord by causing the light of his Cloud to shine, at first gave, and still gives a sign, or a feal to strengthen faith. Signs and seals are appendices to the Covenant, or great Charter of all our mercies. Signs and seales are visible words, Cod speaks by them to the eye. I will set my Bow in the Cloud; God saith, the Bow shall be a sign, he also hath made Water a sign in the holy Sacrament of Baptisme, and he hath made Bread and Wine signes in the holy Sacrament of the Supper; God hath been pleased, from the beginning so far to condescend to mans weakness, as to give him, not only his Word or Promise, but Signes to confirm it. And therefore did the Lord give a sign, because, as himself hath both an all-sufficient power, and full purpose to performe his promise, so he would have the faith of all that are under the Covenant well assured of his faith

Thus we see the spiritual usefulness of this interpretation, taking, the light of his Cloud, for that illustrious sign the Rain-bow set by God in the Cloud, and most fitly called the light shining in his Cloud; which he doth not cause to shine ordinarily or every day as the Sun doth, but at special times, testifying his eminent savour to some, and his care over all mankind. Knowest thou when he caused the light of his Cloud to shine? Elihu proceeds surther, with Job upon interrogatories.

Vers. 16. Dost thou know the ballancing of the Clouds, the wonderful work of him that is perfect in knowledge.

Here's another question. The general scope of all these questions was handled before, I shall now only poynt at that which this question.

Librationes nubis appellat eleganter meo mino. Merc. Vertitur librart mutata D in W.

question specially aymes at. Mr. Broughton reads, Dost thou know the paying of the thick vapours? This is a wonderful work of God. The Clouds are huge ponderous bodies; who is able to guess how much a Cloud weighs? yet God ballanceth the Clouds, he, as it were, puts them into scales, and knows what they weigh; he so orders them, that one part doth not over-power the other, quidem judicio, but both hang with an even poise in the air; this is a wonderful work penfæ velut li- of God. Dift then know how God doth this? or, how he makes brantura Do- the Clouds bigger or leffer, how he placeth them higher or lower, according to the service and use to which he hath appoynted them? Can any man do this? Can any man fully understand how menta, a D79 fuch vast bodies as the Clouds should be poised or ballanced? ponderavit, ad how they hover over our heads, and are kept from falling upon trutinam direz- us? We must have recourse to the wisdome and power of God for this. Doft thou know the ballancing of the Clouds ?

> Hence we may infer, First; If man knoweth not the ballancing of the Clouds, then much less can be ballance them. And

Secondly, Note: 'Tis by a divine power that the Clouds are upheld and bal-

All heavy things tend downward; what then but God keeps the Clouds up, which are so heavy? "Tis a wonder that we have not Seas of waters, rather than showers poured upon us from the Clouds. They that travaile far at Sea, fee the Rain coming down by spours, or like a flood in some places; and certainly the Clouds would come down every where like a flood if God did not hold them up. From which particular instance Eliha would have us take up this general truth, that,

All things are kept in an even ballance by the wisdome and power of God. The things of the world, if God did not ballance them, how would they tumble and fall away, yes, run to ruine! were there not a ballancing operation in the arm of God, over all the affairs and businessess of men, what a hudle and confusion would all be in? We read in Scripture of four things which God is faid to weigh or to ballance, they are all very confiderable.

First, It is said, God weigheth the waters (70b. 28.25.) which may be understood, not only of the waters above in the Clouds,

but of the waters also in the Sea; he knows to a dram, to a grain,

how much all the waters weigh.

Secondly, Which are also vast things, Ic is said (1sa.40.12.) He weigheth the mountains in scales, & the hills in a ballance. Andas both these are true taken litterally, so they are true also if you take them mystically or metaphorically. St John was shewed the judgment of the great whore, in a vision, who sitteth upon many waters (Rev. 17. 1.) Who are meant by waters is explained there (v. 15.) even Peoples, and Multitudes, Nations, and Tongues. The people of the world are compared to waters, and well they may, for their inftability; Unstable they are as water (Gen. 49.4.) and for their aptness to swell and rise up into floods. Now the Lord weigheth these mysticall Waters, Multitudes, and Nations: he knows exactly what they are, what they would be, and what they would do. And as by waters common people or nations, foby mountaines and hills the great the mighty ones of the nations are exprest; Princes and honourable men are as great mountains. Thus spake the Prophet, The day of the Lord shall be against the mountains (Isa. 2.) that is, against the mighty men of this world; Hence that deriding question, Who art thou O great mountain before Zerubbabel? (Zac.4.7.) That is, O thou great man, who are thou? furely, thou art not so much as a mole-hil before the God of Zerubbabel, who when he comes down, the mountaines melt down at his presence (Isa. 64.1.) who, if he doth but touch the mountains, they smoake (Psal. 144. 5.) as if Aruck with Thunder. God weighs these mountains of the earth, that is, he considers and unstands them exactly. God weighed him who was the greatest mountain, of a man, in his time; Belfhazzar was the sole Monarch of the earth, he had almost the whole known world at his command, yet the Lord said of him (Dan. 5.22.) Thou art numbred, thou art weighed, and thou art found too light.

Thirdly, As God weigheth men of all forts, so he weigheth the actions of all sorts of men (2 Sam. 2.3.) By him actions are meighed, that is, all actions are weighed by him; the least actions are weighed by the mighty God, and so are the greatest, he knoweth how to poyle them, and so make use of them, that they may effect what is answerable to his own counsel and purpose. This is, it which the Prophet intended, when he said of the Lord, Thou most upright dost meigh the path of the Just (Isa. 26.7.) that is, the motions,

and goings, or doings of the Just. The pathes of the Just come often into very uneven ballances in this world, every one will be weighing them, one gives this judgement of them, and another that, few hit right, the most of men being either blinded with ignorance of them, or prejudiced with malice against them: But the comfort of the just is, the most upright weigheth their path, and

will give the just weight of them.

Fourthly and lastly, God weigheth the very spirits of men. All the wayes of man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirits (faith Solomon, Prov. 16.2.) The Lord doth not only weigh actions and pathes, that is, the whole outward course and teneur of our lives, but he weighs our spirits, that is, the principles from which our actions flow, and by which we are carried on in our pathes; he findes one man to be of a light, of a vain spirir, and another man to be of a proud high spirit, a third to be of a coverous, having, holding spirit; a fourth of an envious spirit, that cannot bear the good of another; and a fifth to be of a revengful spirit, that wil do another as much hurt as he can. Again, the Lord by weighing finds out them, who soever they are, that have a weighty, serious spirit, that have an upright sincere spirit, that have a heavenly gracious spirit; God knowes who they are that have a spirit for the things and wayes of God in the midst of all contradictions of men; and having thus weighed the spirits of men, he disposeth of them and deals with them accordingly. And I may add this to the question in the text, Dost thou know the ballancing of spirits? Surely no, for thou knowest not the ballancing of the Clouds (which may be known much easier)

The wonderous works of him which is perfect in know-ledge.

Mr. Broughton renders, The miracles of the perfect in knowledge. As if he had said; the shining of the light in his Cloud, and the ballancing of the Clouds, are to be numbred among the wonderous works of him that is perfect in knowledge. The wonderous ness of Gods works was touched at the 14th verse, I shall not stay upon that here; only mark how Elibu describes God by a periphrasis or circumlocution; he doth not say the wonderful works of God, but, the wonderful works of him

That is perfelt in knowledge.

This is a description of God, and such a description as will fit none but God; who hath and who only hath, not only knowledge, but the perfection of it. We need not name God, when we speak of him that is perfect in knowledge, it can be meant of none but him. Eliku, at the 4th verse of the former Chapter, said to Job, He that is perfect in knowledge (meaning himself, as that text was expounded) is with thee. In what sense Elihu might say of himself, that he was perfect in knowledge, was there frewed; and here it must be shewed and confessed, that neither Elihu was, nor any, the most knowing, are persect in knowledge like God, or as God is. The Apostie raich of the best knowers in this world (1 Cor. 13.9.) We know in part, and we prophese in part; we behold darkly as in a glass. They that have the clearest eye-fight, the purest intellectuals, know but in part, and fee but darkly, which is far from perfectly; therefore, I say, this description of perfect in knowledge, hath a peculiar meaning here, proper only to God, as will appear more particularly in opening this Observation from it.

God is not only full of knowledge, but perfect in knowledge; or, The knowledge of God is perfectly perfect.

That's perfectly perfect to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken. Such is the knowledge of God; it is impossible to add any thing to it, and it is as impossible to diminish it: God cannot forget or unlearn any thing already known, nor can be know any more things, no nor any thing more, than he already knoweth; therefore he is perfect in knowledge. More distinctly, the knowledge of God is perfect; For,

First, He knoweth all things; what-ever is knowable he

knoweth. He knowes

First, All things past.

Secondly, He knowes all things present.

Thirdly, He knows all things to come (Isa. 46. 10.) He declareth the end from the beginning. Now he that knowes all things past, present, or to come, is perfect in knowledge.

Secondly, He is perfect in knowledge, for he knowes all things at once, in one prospect or by one aspect; he doth not know one thing after another, nor one thing by another, he knows all at once.

Bbbb Thirdly

Thirdly, He is perfect in knowledge, for he knows all things as they are he doth not know things according to appearance, only or as they are held forth to be. Many will make fair shews, and offer both themselves and their actions as very good, holy, righteous, religious, yet the Lord who seeth through them, seeth them stack nought quite through (Heb. 4. 12.) All things are naked and manifest to him: He seeth to the skin, he seeth through cloaks and vizards, yea, he seeth through skin and all, he lookes into the breast; the breasts of men are to him, as if they were cut open, as the word there imports.

Fourthly, He is perfect in knowledge, For he knoweth all things in himself. God doth not go out of himself to search here and there for knowledge and information. We run to this and that book, to this and that man, to setch in knowledge and yet we know but little when we have done all; but the Lord knowes all things

in himself, without search or fludy.

Fitthly, He knowes all things unerringly; he knoweth them fo as there is not the least mistake in his knowledge; that's perfect knowledg. How many errours are there in our knowledge? how much darkness in our light? But God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

Sixthly, He knowes all things everlastingly; all things are before him alwayes. Some men quite lose the knowledge of many things which they have known, but all that God knoweth (which is all) abidethin the same clearness and sullness with him for ever.

Seventhly, He knows all things as perfectly as if he had but one thing to know, therefore he is perfect in knowledge. We use to say of a man that hath a knowledge scattered upon many matters, or that is knowing in many Arts, and Trades, and businesses, we say, this man is something in every thing, and nothing in any thing; he hath no full knowledge of any one thing, his knowledge being divided upon or among so many things. But such is the perfection of Gods knowledge, that he knowes all things as perfectly as if he had but one thing to know. To him that is infinite, one and allies all one. And from hence (to close up the whole point and this werse) take these five Inferences.

First then, Toknow, is to be like God, for God is a God of knowledge.

Thow unlike God are ignorant persons!

Second-

Aliquis in onnibus, nullus in Lingulis. Secondly, The more perfect our knowledge is, the more like we are

to God, for he is abiolutely perfect in knowledge.

Thirdly, If God be perfect in his knowledge, then, We need not fear any good which we do, unfeen of men, shall be list, for God lees and knows it. Though your left handiknow not what your right hand doth, yet never fear what you have done shall be buried, for God is perfect in knowledge.

Fourthly, If God be perfect in knowledge, No evil doer hash any ground of hope, that any evil he doth can be hid, though done never so much hiddenly, or in the dark. God is so perfect in knowledge that to him, darkness is no darkness; the da kuess and the light

to him are both alike.

Fifthly, If God be perfect in knowledge, Then he fully knows the needs of his people all the world over; he knowes the state of every one for foul and body. This Christ makes an argument of support in our greatest needs (Mat. 6. 32.) Be not careful what ye shall eat, &c. be not dispondently careful or fearful about any thing, for your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. Men in straits use to say, if such a friend did but know of our wants, he would help us. Here is comfort to the people of God, he knows their state in general, and their straits in particular, for he is perfect in knowledge. We may rest affured, that he who hath so perfect a knowledge, mingled with perfect compassions, will in due time give us perfect help out of all our straits, and a perfect supply of all our wants.

J O B, Chap. 37. Vers. 17, 18.

Dost thou know, &c.

17. How thy garments are warm, when he quieteth the earth by the fouth wind?

18. Hast thou with him spread out the skie which is strong, and as a molten looking-glass?

This context sheweth yet further, the utter insufficiency of man to comprehend those wonderful works of God, concerning which Elihu spake in the close of the 15th verse. And here we have a conviction of mans insufficiency two wayes.

First, In reference to his ignorance of what God doth upon him, verf. 17. Dost thou know how thy garments are warm? &c.

Secondly, To his weakness, in giving God any affistance about what he hath done, vers. 18. Hast thou, with him, spread out the

skie which is Arong ? &c.

Thus Elihu cometh nearer to Job than before, not only convincing him of his ignorance in those things which were far above him. but even in those that were about him; not only with respect to the Clouds of heaven, but to the cloathes upon his back. And it hath troubled some Interpreters upon these words, while they confidered the feeming lowness and meanness of the matter in question, which here Elihu puts to Job, as also, how Elihu (having discoursed of so many wonderful works of God, in the former part of the Chapter, his wonderful works in Lightning, in Thunder, in Rain and Snow, in the motion of the Winds, in ballancing of the Clouds, and in the admirable aspect and appearances of the Rain-bow; It troubles some Interpreters, I say, to consider how Elihu, after a large discourse of these greater matters) should come at last to speak of Jobs garments, and the warmth received by them. What cognation or proportion is there between those high and great things above, and the garments which he daily wore? Do these deserve to be reckoned up among the secrets of Nature? or, was Job so stupid, that he could not give a reason of their warmth? Knowest then

Chap. 37. An Exposition upon he Book of Je B. Versi. 17. 557

Verf. 17. How thy garments are wine of the we quieteth the earth by the South wind?

So we are to resume that part of the question out of the former verse, though not expressed here. As there he said expressly, Dost thou know when God disposed them? dost thou know the ballancing of the Clouds? So here he saich impliedly, Dost thou know how

thy garments are warm? Some make this and the former verse one entire sentence, quite leaving out those words, Doff thou know, in the latter part; Doft thou know the ballancing of the Clouds, O thou whose garments are warm upon thee, when the earth is quieted by the South mixd? Hast thou, with him, spread out the Skie, which is strong, and as a molten looking glass? The meaning of which reading is briefly this; Othou, who can'st not bear thy clothes in a hot day, but art forced to leave thy labour, and retire to thy rest, when the earth is quieted, the Sun being far ascended to the South (that's the time of heat) Didst thou, with him, spread out the Skie, which is strong as a molten looking-glass? Didst thou work in the Furnace, or in that fiery heat with God, when he did, as it were, like a mighty Founder, cast the whole Heavens into that glorious mould, or form, in which they appear and seem to move? The words are an allusion to those Artists who work in Mettals, and cast them into Vessels of one fort and fize or another, for the several uses & services of man: Such a thing is the Skie over us, which is therefore here compared to a molten looking-glass, that is, to a glass made of molten mettal. Thus, I say, some read the context as one entire sentence, and there is a clearness in it.

But I shall keep to our own reading, and so we have two diffined questions; Dost thou know how thy garments are warm? Hast thou, with him, spread out the Skie?

I begin with the first, Dost thou know

How thy garments are warm?

Canst thou give an account of that sudden change, whence it is that the South wind ceasing to raise stormes in the earth, there should presently succeed such servent heat, that thou art not able to bear thy own ordinary clothes? The text is, that, or how it cometh to pass, that thy garments are warm. As if Elihu had said, I have

Pro TUND The Exod. 34. 18.

eabout higher and greater marrers; I will I have dea now put a quemon to thee which is more tamiliar, Canft thou tell me how thy garments are warm? Surely if thou are not able to give me a clear reason about that, how art thou able to enter into the more referved fecrets of God? tell me, if thou canst, How thy

Garments are warm?

tas, mendacium, te quod vesti-

The word which we translate garments, hath a very considerable fignificancy in it, coming from a root rendred deceir, fallhood, and a lie. The garments which we wear are both a regument or covering of our nakedness, and a testimony of our perfidiousness and falleness with the great God. Before man finned mentum sit pri- he wore no garments, nor had he need to wear any, innocency was mi hominu con- his cloathing; nor was the natural man ever so gloriously adorned, deckt and dreft, as when he had no garments besides his innocentum & testi- Cy. When man prevaricated and dealt failly with God, when he monium. Brix. sinned and broke the commandment (his nakedness appearing and his shame) he then got a simple covering, such as he could make for himself of fig-leaves, till God provided him a covering of skins, Garments began with our fin, till then (faith Mofes, Gen. 2.) the man and the woman were both naked, and were not ashamed; but when once man had finned, then shame came into the world, and then both God and Nature provided garments to cover his shame; All this the word imports, that we, through sin, having lost our natural garments, our robe of created innocency and integrity, we are constrained by shame to take up these artificial garments or coverings to hide our nakedness. It is not unprofitable for us to remember, that the Spirit of God in the Orginal language hath expressed our garments by such a word, as leads us to the orides fuit; itag; ginal of them, our dealing falfly with God and finning against him. Dost thou know how thy garments

Chami nomen, vel a calore, vel a nigredine fa-Hum; Neque ut videtur sine numine, cum

qua Chamo contingit Aphrica immoAre warm?

The word which fignifieth to heat, or make warm (I note that by the way also) was the name of one of the sons of Noah; he had three, called Sem, Ham, and Fapheth. Ham or Cham was that son who saw his fathers nakedness, and told his two brethren dico affulabo- mithout, not grievingly, but deridingly, which brought a curse upver. Bochart. on him. This Cham had his name from heat; and that portion and

part

part of the world which, according to the opinion of the learned, was affigned to the posterity of Cham, is one of the hottest climates in the world; theinhabitants of those Countries by reason of the extream heat of the Sun, being black, are called Blackmores. Aphrica for-And all Affrica was called Ammonia, either because the Idol of the monia dista, Sun was worshipped there, or because the Sun-beams are alwayes cum ob culining Sun was worthipped there, or because the sun state and are always hot and fiery upon it. Yet as the word notes that extream heat Ammonis i.e. hot and fiery upon it. Yet as the word notes that extream heat Solin, tam prawhich causeth blackness, so any moderate heat; Dost thou know cipue ob assume the sun of the sun o bow thy garments are marm?

From the notation of the word rendred garments,

Solares quibus exposita est. Fuller Mifc.

Observe first; When we put on our clothes we should remember our sin, or, Our garments are memorials of our fin.

The covering of our natural nakedness is a discovery of our spiritual; and therefore when we cover our natural nakedness we should think of our spiritual. Tis sin alone which makes us shame fully naked, Moses saw the people were naked, when they had made the golden Calf (Exod. 32.25.) not that they had no clothes on them, but they had got a new fin upon them, and had loft their former integrity, which was a better ornament than clothing, as also the protection of God, which was a better guard or defence than armour. Our garments, which are an occasion of pride to many, should be an occasion of humiliation to all. Let us take heed of finning in the use of garments, seeing it was fin that brought in the use of garments. I only mind the reader of it from the notation of the word.

Secondly, What is here faid of garments? Knowest thou how thy garments are warm? That is, warm thee, or, keep thee warm.

> Hence note ; Garments are given for warmth.

That's one use or service of garments. There is a sourfold use of garments.

First, To cover our nakedness and hide our shame.

Secondly, To diffinguish our fex, man from woman. The law of Mofes forbad the man to wear the womans apparrel, or the woman the mans (Deut. chap. 22. verf. 5.)

Thirdly, Carments are useful for ornament. There are garments of glory and honour, garments to fet forth the stare and condition, as well as the fex of the person wearing them. Aaron and his fons had garments made them by Gods own appointment, for glory and for beauty (Exod. 28. 2, 40.) The Kings and Pinces of the world wear garments becoming their state and Majesty; and inferiour Magistrates have their proper garments, luiting their offices and dignity.

Fourthly, (Which is the common use of garments, and that which the text speaks of) they are for warmth, to keep out the cold, and to defend us from the injuries and violence of the weather; yet we scarce know, or do not fully know, how that comes

to pais.

Hence observe, Thirdly; How our garmerts warm us is a secret, and that they warm us is from the bleffing of God.

Though there be a natural cause of this warmth, yet there is some-what of God, yea, much of God init. The effect of that natural cause dependeth wholly upon the concurrence and power of God. That Speech of the Prophet to the Jowes newly returned from Babylon, and neglecting the Lords house, while they too much attended the building of their own, doth fully evince this for truth (Haggai 1. 6.) Ye have sown much, but bring in little (naturally they that fow much, should bring in much; bur God can stop the influences of the heavens, and the increase of the earth, & though the feed time be great, the harvest shall be small) again, ye eat (and then sure they were satisfied; no, saith the Propher, ye ear) but ye have not enough; which not only implyeth that they had not enough to eat (though that might be a truth) bur, that though they did eat enough, yet there was not a nutritive vertue in the meat, it did not content or satisfie the stomack & renue their strength: He adds, ye drink, but are not filled with drink, which also implyeth, not only that they had but a little to drink, but that their drink was not comfortable or thirst-quenching to them. Lastly (which is the instance of the text) Te cloath you, but there is no warmth. What was the reason of all this, That they did eat and had not enough, drink and were not filled, put on cloathing and were not warme? The

text gives answer (v.g.) Because I did blow uponit, or blow it away; that is, I sent out a curse which blasted all your creature injoyments, and blowed away the comforts and usual efficacy of them; so that ye had only a fael without a kernel, or only skin and bones without the marrow and farnels of all, my favour and bleffing. That our cleaths warm us, as well as that our meat and drink nourish us, is from the blessing of God.

Fourthly, When he faith, Knowest thou how thy garments are

warm?

Note:

Man cannot give a full account or reason of common thing; or of his dayly comforts and enjoyments.

What's more common than for a man to wear garments? what then to find his garments warm upon him, or himself warm in his garments? and why a mans cloaths warm him we need not go to enquire of a great Philosopher, any man, any common man can give or affign a cause of it. Yet there is some-what in it beyond natural causes, which few take any notice of, and none can sufficiently or fully apprehend. Second causes produce their estects, the temperature of the air is a cause of warmth, and the garments we wear, warm us by exciting and drawing out the congenial warmth within us; yet Elibu puts on the question further than that, Knowest thou how thy garments are warm,

When he quieteth the earth with the South Wind?

Or as some translate, When the earth is quiet by the South Wind. translative Mr. Broughton reads, when the land is still. The original is only the South, When he quieteth the earth, or when the earth is quiet by the South; that is, when gentle windes or briezes blow from Meridies quasi the Southern parts. The word rendred South or South wind, comes habitatio alta, from a root fignifying an high habitation, because the Sun is highest quod Sol in the when its in the South, that's its Meridian or high both elevation plaga altim and habitation. And as when the Sun cometh into the South, 'is incedar. in its highest elevation above us, so 'tis hottest in opperation upon us.

So that, by the South, he meaneth the Spring and Summer time, autro dum non when the Sun makes his Southern progress. And because usually flogellaturab austroprocelour garments are warmest upon us, when the South wind bloweth, lofo. Loc.

Quem trans quilla eft terra. plerumque inusurpatur.Pisc.

Quiescit ab there- vide eum.

therefore we render it by the South wind. The South wind sometimes bringeth stormes, as was shewed at the 9th verse, Out of the South cometh the Whirlwind; but mostly the South wind bringeth a calm and heat (Luke 12.55.) When ye see (saith Christ) the South wind blow, ye say, there will be heat, and it cometh to pass. As the North wind usually blowes cold, so the South wind usually blowes hot, or bringeth heat. Here's a natural cause of warmth, the quieting of the earth by the South wind.

Terra est aer propingua terra. Pisc. But is the earth at any time unquiet? If not, why is it faid, he quieteth the earth? Here by the earth we are to understand that part of the Air which is nearest to the Earth. The Earth taken strictly is not unquiet, but the Air, in which we (who are upon the Earth) breath, the wind blowing, is unquiet and stormy, and when God commands down the storm and sends a calm he is said to quiet the Earth. So then, by the Earth, we are to understand the Air immediately compassing us, who dwell and move upon the Earth; and God quieteth the earth with the South, or South wind, when we on earth are quiet and quit from troublesom or tempessuous weather.

Hence note;
The natural quietness of the Air which we have on Earth, is of God.

When there are no stormes nor blustring winds in the Air, God shews both his power and goodness, he then quieteth the Earth; we are to acknowledge God in it, and bless him for ir, when the Earth is quiet. The disciples (Matth. 8, 26.) being in a great storm at Sea, and faing the Vessel would be over-set, and that they should perish in the Waters, Christ said to the Sea, Peace, be still; and presently there was a great calm. He that quiets the Sea, quiets the Earth too. Christ hath calmes or peaceable winds, as well as stormes and stormy winds at his dispose.

And if the natural quietness of the Earth be the work of God, then much more is the civil quietness of it. God alone giveth quietness among men, he maketh them of one House, and them of one Nation to live quiet. When there are no winds, no temperatuous winds blowing in the skie, there may be stormes and tempests in the Spirits of men; and when there is a tempest within, only he who formes the spirit of man within him (Zech. 12.1.)

can keep it from breaking out. There are civil storms as well as natural, and the former are much more troublesome and dangerous than the latter: God raiseth those stormes in judgment. He fent an evil Spirit between Abimelech and the men of Sichem (Judg. 9. 23.) That is, he either gave Saran (the great mafter of mil-tule) leave to kindle jealousies & animolities between them, or he gave them up to their own evil, envious and malicious spiris, which hurried them on to their mutual vexation and destruction: now, as God raiseth these storms in judgment, so he either prevents or rebukes them in mercy. It is God who quiets both the spirits of Princes in governing, and the spirits of people in submitting and obeying. He hath a South wind, some benigne and favourable wind, which he breathes upon the children of men, and then they are quiet, and then all's quiet : God being quiet towards, that is Tranquillus well-pleased with, and savourable unto man, he quiets all things. Deen tranquil-If the Lord do but say the word, what storm, what tempest, what latoumize wrath, what rage, what outrage foever there is in the earth, all's husht and still. Eliku affirmed this strongly when he put that challenging question (Chap. 34. 29.) When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble; whether against a nation or a man only? Natural quietness, much more civil, but above all, spiritual quietness is of the Lord.

When there is the greatest unquietness in the Air, and in the affaires of this world, when (as it is faid of those times, 2 Chron. 15.5.). There is no peace to him that goeth out, nor to him that comes in, but great vexations are upon all the inhabitants of the countryes, men contending with and (like heafts) tearing one an other, yet even then there may be spiritual quietness in the soul of a believer; he may fit still and unmoveable, in the favour and love of God, though the earth be moved (yea removed) and the hills carried into the midst of the Sea. This is eminently the work of of God; he can give quierness to th worldly unquietnes. Christ said to his disciples, and in them to all believers (John 16.33.) These things have I spiken to you that ye might have peace; in the world ye shall have tribulation. The meaning of Christ is not to assure his disciples, that they shall have peace in him after they have had tribulation in the wold, but that their inward spiritual peace shall Synchronize or be con-temporary with their outward worldly tribulations. To have trou-

Cccc 2

ble without, and peace within, at the same time, This is the special gift of God. The text tells us, God quieteth the earth; and as that gift of natural quietness is a mercy, so civil quietness is a great mercy, and spiritual quietness, quietness of heart and tranquility of mind, especially in the midst of tribulations, is the greatest mercy of all. We should pray earnessly, that God would keep the earth quiet, or quiet the earth, when ever we find it unquiet, by some gracious South wind, but above all, that he would quiet our spirits by the sweet breathings of his blessed Spirit, that though at any time there should be nothing (which God forbid) but unquietness on the earth, yet we may have much quietness in our hearts.

Again consider, the former context told us of stormes and tempests, of thunder and lightening, of snow and rain, driving men from their labour in the field, to their homes and houses, and the wild beasts of the fields to their dens and coverts: Now this text speakes of warmth, of calmes, and quietness, He quieteth the earth by the South wind.

Hence observe; There is a continual viciffitude in natural things.

As no day of the year is of the same continuance or length as to light, so very few are of the same complexion or temper as to heat and cold, fair or fowl weather, stormes or calmes. Now if there be such a vicissitude in natural things, then do not wonder that there is a viciffitude in civil things, or in the affaires and conditions of men in this world. If after the faire weather of health and peace, the fowl weather of fickness and trouble come upon us, if after calmes we meet with stormes, let us not be troubled. A heathen Poet said. We should not be d'ffident in a stormy day, that we shall never have quietness, no should we be confident in a quiet day, that we shall never have a storm. David, a holy man, was once exceedingly out in both; in his advertity he faid, I shall never be established; that was the sence of his saying, when in his hafte he faid, all men are liars (Plat. 116. 11.) In his prosperity he said, I shall never be moved. The Lords favour had made his mountain stand strong, and he began not only to think but conclude it would alwayes stand in the same strength, till his experience confuted that fancy, Thou didft hide thy face, and I was trou-

Nemo confidat nimium fecundis, nemo desperet mediora lapsis: Res Deus nofrus celeri roartas turbine versat. Sen, in Thyeste. bled (Pfal. 30. 6, 7.) Tis good for us to be in expectation of, and preparation for all forts of changes, seeing all things here below are changable. That great Monarch said (Dan. 4. 4.) I Nebushadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and slourishing in my pallace, yet presently he saw in a dream, that all his flourishing prosperity was but like a dream that passeth away; and while those boats of an earthly greatness and settlement were in his mouth (vers. 30.) Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the Kingdome, &c. There sell a voyce from Heaven (vers. 31.) saying, O King Nebucadnezar, to thouse its spoken, the Kingdome is departed from thee. All sublunary things, the surest and best settled estates, not only of the men of this world, or of worldly men, but of all men, even of good men, in this world, are as subject to changes, as the Moonis, or as the wind and weather.

Lastly, Whereas, when Elihu to the question, Knowest thou how thy garments are warm, puts this addition, when he quieteth the earth with the South wind? Job might say, that's an aniwer to the question. If you ask me, how my garments are warm? I answer, By Gods quieting the earth with the South wind. But here is fomething more intended; though this be a cause of warmth, yet not all the cause. It is possible for the weather to be warm, and our garments not warm. It was shewed before, that God is able to suspend the working or effects of nature : as, through his power a man may be in the fire and yet the fire not burn him (it was fo with the Three Children in Daniel) so a man may be in the Sunthine, and his clothes not warm him. God can stay or stop the influences and effects of the Sun. The thining of the Sun and the quietness of the Air are true reasons of the warmth we feel in cur garments, yet not all the reason. And therefore Eliha would convince Fob by this question, that if he could not give the whole reafon of Naturals, much less could be of providentials. And as he convinceth him of his infusficiency, and incompetency to deal and debate with God, by his ignorance about the warmth of his garments that covered him; So in the next verie, he convinceth him of weakness and inability, by calling him to consider the mighty power and felf-sufficiency of God, who alone, without any of his or of any mans alfiltance, made and ipread out the migney garment, the Skie, which enwraps and covers all men and all things on earth, That's the general import of the following question.

Ver

Verf. 18. Hast then with him spread out the Sky, which is string, and as a molten looking-Glaffe.

תרקיט Ponitur pro ex ipsa sententia liquet. Deus pandit calos dit eos ampliss. Pisc:

The word which we render, and is here used as a Verb, to spread, beareth an allusion to Metals, which are beaten out by an prætorito; hoc hammer into plates. The Nowne signifies the Firmament (Gen. 1.) because it is an expansion, or thing spread out. I find the Verb is enim semet ex- applyed to the work of God upon the Earth (Pfat. 136.6.) where the Pialmist puts this among the praises of God, or the cum eas creat things for which God is to be praised, To him who stretched out. ver, non expan- the earth. The stretching or spreading out of the earth is the work of God, as well as the spreading out of the Heaven. The earth is a folid opacous and globous body, yet it is faid to be threeched out, because as there is a roundness in the Earth, so a mighty extent and vallness. To him that stretched out the earth above the waters, to him give thanks. But though the Earth be also firerched out, yet more properly (of which Eliha here speaks) the Sky. Haft thou with him spreadout

The Sky?

לשחקים Cælum vel nubes vel aerem aliqui conjun-Elim de omnibus accipiunt. Scult:

Cali sie dilli a stenuitate sub-stantiæ, et ? valet articucasm. Pisc: Apud Hebraes

Shamaiim & Schehhhim; ita apud Latification, Merc:

The word rendred Sky, is put someimes for the Air, someimes fignificar, unde for the Clouds, as also for the Heavens above both the Clouds and Air. Several of the learned expound it here of the Air, that is, of all below the Moon; others of the Heavens which are above. Hast thou with him spread out the Sky, or the Heaven?

This spreading forth of the Sky may have a three-fold refe-

First, To the eternal Councel of God before time. As if he Ium accusativi had said, Wast thou with God when he decreed or purposed to spread out the Heavens?

Secondly, To the work of God in the beginning of time. idem fignificant Walt thou with God, when he did actually spread out the Sky or Firmament in the second dayes work of Creation? (Gen. 1.6.)

Thirdly, (which some infift much upon) to the daily or frenos calum & quently renewed work of God in ordering and altering the face Ather; inter- and motion of the Heavens. As if he had laid, Haft thou with him, dum ser media when the Sky seeming to be wrapped up in darkness, and rent with sum nubes hoc thunder and storms; hast thou then with him scattered the darknomine signi ness, and cleared up the air, making all strong or whole again? Thus he is supposed speaking of a thing often done, even after every

ftorme, not of spreading the Sky at first.

The Vulgar Latine renders it ironically, in the second sense; Tu forfican Thou perhaps didst joyn with him in making the Heavens! As if cum illo fabri-Elihu had said, 'Tis like, or belike thou wast with him when he catmies calos. made the Heavens; Thou surely wast the Giant or Mighty man who affifted at the spreading out of that vast Canopie. Didst thou poor worm, contribute thy help, or lend thy hand to God in the creation of the World? are we beholding to thee that the Heavens which we behold, compasse in all things with their embraces? you speak of your felf at such a rate as if you had been a partner or coadjutor with God in the Creation, and had with bins spread out the Heavens. Thus the words are a firong Negation; Thou hadft nothing to do with God when he spread out the Heavens in the work of Creation; why then art thouso busie with God about the works of his Providence, and particularly about his dealing with thy felf? The fum of Elihu's argument in this matter may be thus conceived; If God call not man in other things as a Counsellor or Judge of his actions, nor can be required of any man to do so, nor may any man presume to speak against his ordering the Heavens and Meteors, which yet concern the great good or burt of thousands; then it must needs be a very unequall thing that any one man should expect of God a reason of his particular dealing with him, but patiently submit unto it, not at all questioning, either his justice or his goodness, how greatly and grievously soever be is afflicted.

First, Taking the Heavens, either strictly, or, as many do, synecdochecally, a part being put for the whole work of Creation,

Note; God made the world;

He spread the Heavens, and fretched out the Earth, Heaven

and Earth are the work of his hands.

Secondly, God had no partner in his work. Hast thou with him (pread out the Sky? The Scripture is much in exalting the honour of God, as the fole Agent and Efficient in ferring up the frame of the World, (Isa 44. 24.) Thus faith the Lord, I am the Lord that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the Heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the Earth by my self. The Prophet bring's in God speaking thus, to comfort his ancient people when they

saw none to help them. What cannot God do alone, who firetcheth out the Heavens alone? Cannot be bring back the Church of the Jews out of Babylon alone, who fretcheth out the Heavens alone? cannot he raise up Cyrus for his Shepherd, and move him to make Proclamation for their return, when there was none to move him about it? He frastrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh Diviners mad. Those lying Diviners said, the Fews were fast enough for coming our, but God frustrated their tokens, and made them mad at their disappoyntments. Now as this may exceedingly comfort and encourage the people of God all the world over in their greatest straits, that God made the world, and spread out the Sky alone, so it doth exceedingly advance the power and glory of God. If a man have but a great Carpet or Coverlet to untold, he must call in the help of two or three to spread it and hold it up, one man cannot do it alone: But God spread out the Heaven, that mighty Canopie of the Heavens alone. And his spreading of it was the making of it; The mighty God by one act gave the Sky both its being and its forme: And all this he did without either Counsellor or Coadjutor. No man ever did any very great thing in the world, but it was either by the help of other mens heads in contriving, or by the help of their hands in effecting. To be a sole-Agent of Great things, is the sole-priviledge of the Great God. And furely if the Lord God had no affiftant in the great work of Creation, he needs no affistance in his greatest works of Providence. He who made the world without help, can do what he pleaseth in the world without help. Our help (faith the Psalmist 124. 8.) is in the name of the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth; but the Maker of Heaven and of Earth, fetcheth all his help from his own Name.

Elihu having magnified the power of God in spreading out the Sky, takes occasion to give us a description of the Sky, Hast thou

with him spread out the Sky

Which is firong, and as a molten Looking-Glaffe?

We have here two things confiderable in the Sky; First, the strength of it; Secondly, the clearness of it. But is the Sky strong? that may be thought an improper and incongruous Epithete: The Sky seemeth to be a weak thing, and the Air will scarce bear a feather; yet saith he, Hast thou with him spread out the Sky which

is strong? How are the Heavens or Sky strong? Philosophers and Interpreters upon this place, have largely discoursed the matter of the Heavens, which to our sence are a very thinn subMance, and

therefore feem to have little strength in them.

I answer, Though to sense and view the Sky or Heavens seem to have little strength in them, yet indeed their strength is beyond that of Rocks and Mountains. The learned Languages, both Greek and Latine, expresse the Sky by words which properly fignishe Grength and firm ess; and we following the Latine word com- Firmitas tribumonly call it in our English tongue, The Firmament, as much as itur calo propto say, a firms thing. When the Apossle would set forth the steatistatem, under diness (or as we translite) the sted fastness of the faith of the Co-Septuaginta laffians, he makes use of this word (sepsaux Chap. 2. 5.) As if he dicunt sepsahad faid, I rejoyce to behold the firmament of your faith, or that uz Latini Firyour faith is as firme as the Firmament. Surely then the Sky of talmentum. Firmament is very strong, else the strength of faith (which being strong, is the strongest thing, both actively and passively, in the world) had never been expressed by it. The Heavens are said to be strong (as faith is) because of their lastingness and duration. The Angels are pure Spirits, they are purer and of a more spiritual substance than the Sky or Heavens, yet they are strong, fo strong and powerfull, that they are called Powers; their strength is not a corporal strength of slesh and bone, as ours, and that of beafts is, nor is it a strength by compactness of earthy parts, as that of Stones and Metals is, but 'tis a strength of lastingness and activity arising from their spiritualness. Thus the Sky, especially taking it for the Heavens above the air, is pure, there is a spiritualness in its nature, and so a strength of lastingness in ir, beyond that of any earthly or elementary body. The Heavens are not PSVA fufiles made up of contrary qualities, as elementary bodies are: In them 131 fundere liquifacere, hear and coldness, moysture and driness, are mingled together, non a pis and these contending with each other, at last subdue each other; coargare. whence all elementary bodies become weak and corruptible. The Merc: Heavens have some cognition with elementary bodyes, yet withour the contrariety of active qualities. Heaven is like the Element of the Earth, in regard of firmness and solidity; it is like the warer, in regard of its moveableness; it is like the air, in regard of its pellucidness or clearness; it is like the fire, with respect to its activeness. Heaven shines, yet 'cis without heat; 'tis solid, yet Dddd

without dryness; 'tis compact, yet without moystness; 'tis diaphanous and pellucid, yet without pores, or those small and unfenfible holes, whereby sweat and vapours pass out of the body. So then the Scripture calls Heaven strong or firme, not as groffe bodyes are called firme and strong, but because of its perpetual confidency and (as to nature) indiffolubility; which doth the more highly advance and commend the power of God, who hath given it a strength and firmness, beyond that of Rocks and Adamants: For how fluid and moveable soever the Heavens are to view, yet they are the most strong and durable part of the whole Creation. Hast thou with him spread out the Sky which is strong,

And as a molten Looking-Glaffe.

Some read these words as an entire sentence, which is strong as a molten Looking-Glasse. So Mr Broughton, Couldst thou make a Firmament with him of the Air, setled as Glasse molten? We put it distinctly in two parts, which is strong, and as a melten Looking-Posta veteres Glasse. Some of the old Poets used a like Epithete concerning Xahrsov spr - Heaven, they called it, The Brazen Heaven. What the Lord threatens as a judicial affl ction (Dent. 28. 23.) The Heaven that is over thine head shall be Brasse, that Heaven resembles in its natural constitution, 'cis like B asse, or like a molten Looking-Glasse, by reason of its shining brightness. That which we commonly call Glass, or a Looking-Glass is molten : of which we read (Ex d 38.8.) Moses made the Brazen Laver of the Losking-Glasses of the Women. The godly women among the Jewes made a better use of their Looking-Glasses, than to dress themselves by, they offered them to the service of God in the Tabernacle.

One of the Jewish Doctors warns us to confider that the word TRI Eft videresinde visus which we render a Looking-Glasse, may be taken for a look, or for To Speculum. the appearance of a thing : As if he had said, The Heavens are not Rab: Kimhi only strong, but cleare, looking like, or being, to look on, like a in lib: rad: thing that is molten. Glasse is a diaphanous splendid body, we may see through ir, or see the representation of objects in it. Thus the Heavens are strong as steele, and cleare as a molten Looking-Glaffe.

> Hence observe : First, The Heavens are durable, they are strong.

> > Secondly,

vov appella-

Secondly, The Heavens are transparent, they are as a Lock ng Glasse.

From this latter we may infer,

There is much to be feen in the Heavens;

They are a Looking-Glasse which represent many things to us, It hath been faid, The whole world is a Looking Classe, every Serdian fie-Age we live in is a Looking-Glasse, in which many, both things culum. and persons, are discovered: I may say much more, the Heavens are a Looking Glasse, wherein we may behold much of God, and much of our felves. And because the Heavens are called a Looking-Glasse, it should mind us to look upon the Heavens; they may mind us,

First, What God is, who hath made the Heavens (Pfal. 19. 1.) The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy work. We may see God by the Heavens;

First, In his nature, that he is pure and holy. He that hath made fuch a pure thing as the Heaven is, how pure is he! There is no dirt in the Sky, no filth in the Heavens, no uncleanness there; the dust or filth of this world can get but a little into the air, it cannot reach the Heavens. The purity of God is such as may shame the purity of the Heavens, and make them blush; though the Heavens are the purest part of the world, yet comparatively to God they are impure. This Eliphaz afferts expresly (Chap. 15. 15.) Behold, he putteth no trust in his Saints, yea, the Heavens are not clean in his fight. Bildad puts it yet further (Chap. 26. 5.) Yea, the Starrs (which are the most pure and resplendent part of the Heavens) are not pure in his sight.

Secondly, The Heavens are a Glasse, wherein we may behold the power of God. How unconceiveable is his power, who hath made such a Canopie, and spread it over the heads of all Creatures! And if the visible Heavens are so glorious, what is the Heaven of Heavens! The Heaven which we see, is but the pavement of that which is unfeen. God hath made fuch a Ceeling for this House below, as never needed mending, or repaire, he harh set such a Roof upon it as abides all weathers.

Thirdly, We may see in this Glass the wisdome of God, his wonderfull wisdome in contriving and fitting such a beautifull Dddda

Fourthly, We may see in the Heavens the unchangeableness of God. If he hath made the Heavens of such a lasting nature, that they have continued many thousand years without alteration; surely then he himself hath continued and will continue for ever without change, as he is at this day. The unchangeableness of God infinitely exceeds that of the Heavens. We find the Spitit of God by holy David infinitely preferring the God of Heaven, before the Heavens of God, in his unchangeableness (Psal. 102.26, 27.) Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the Earth, and the Heavens are the mork of thy hand; they shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same. The Heavens have but a shadow of unchangeableness, compared with God, With whom is no variableness nor skadow of changing.

Fifthly, In this Class of the Heavens we may look upon or contemplate the wonde full goodness of God to the sons of men, (Psal. 8.3.) When I consider the Heavens, the work of thy singers, the Moon, and the Starrs, which thou hast ordained: What is man that thou are mindfull of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him? When-ever we behold the Heavens, it should mind us of the mercy and goodness of God to man two wayes. Fi st, in making the Heavens for his use, while he dwels on the Earth. Secondly, that he hath prepared and provided him such a dwelling house, when he shall leave this Earth (2 (or. 5.1.) We know that when the earthly house of this Tabernacle shall be dissiplied, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the

Heavens.

Again, The Heavens are a Looking-Glass, wherein we may behold our selves.

First, We may behold our weakness and impurity, and so our unlikeness to the Heavens, much more to the God of Heaven. When opposites are set one by or over against the other, they illustrate each other. In the spotless Heavens, we may see our spots; The pure Heavens may shew us our impurity.

Secondly, As in the Ficavens we may fee what we are, so what

we should be. The purity of the Heavens tells us we should be pure, they tell us we should be heavenly-minded, that is, fer our minds chiefly upon heavenly things; yea, that our minds should be like the Heavens, pure and spotless. It is said of the Church (Cant. 6. 10.) Who is this that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun? Such, in a qualified sense, are all the parts and true members of the Church. Shall a man fay, he hopes for an inheritance in the Heavens, when his mind is earthly, or when he minds only earthly things? Worldly men are not only earthly-minded, but their minds are earth, and themselves are called earth (Jer. 22. 29. and Rev. 12. 16.) Surely then they are earthly. On the o her hand, godly men thould not only mind heavenly things, but be a Heaven before they come to Heaven. The Church on Earth is called Heaven (Heb. 12.26.) Tet once more I hake not the Earth only, but also Heaven; that is, the Church state. St John saith (Rev. 12.7.) There was war in Heaven : But is there war in Heaven? is it not all peace and joy there? How then faith that Scripture, There was mar in Heaven? By Heavon there he means the Church on earth, which is called Heaven; First, because there is not a more lively reprefentation or retemblance of the highest Heavens (which is the habitation of Gods holiness, and of his glory) than the Church here below, which is a company of Saints and faithfull ones. Secondly, because the Church, while on Earth, hath more to do in Heaven, and for Heaven, then in or for the Earth; and that in three respects.

First, Her birth is from Heaven, being born of God.

Secondly, Her traffick is in and for Heaven. The Apostle saich of himself, and of all such as are truly the Church of God (Phil. 3. 20.) Our conversation is in Heaven; our trade is in Heaven. Though we have business on Earth, yet that which is our business indeed is in Heaven. The Church hath more to do in Heaven than on Earth; her paines and labours, her cares and endeavours are more for heavenly than for earthly things. They that bestow most of their labour upon earthly things, are earthly. In all things we ought to be heavenly, and in every thing we do, we ought to be doing for Heaven.

Thirdly, Because her Head and her Inheritance is in Heaven.

Here

Here she is a stranger, there is her home; nor is the ever truly at home, till she comes thicher.

Thus as Heaven is a Glass, wherein we may see what we ought to be now; we should labour to be pure, constant, and of an unvariable temper, as the Heavens are; so what we shall be, and shall have hereafter; Tis such a Glass as God hath made for us to behold our selves in, and above all to behold himself, his blessed self in. Let us dresse our selves by this Glasse every day.

Let it not satisfie us to look upon the Heavens, that we may see and be taken with their own beauty and excellency, as Philosophers do in their discourses of Heaven; but let us see God in them, let us see Grace and Glory in them. There is so little of God in the discourses of Philosophers (saith one) that they are colder than the Frost and Snow, of which they often discourse. But let us see God in this Looking-Glass of the Heavens, and therein also let us see our selves, and learn to be fitting and preparing our selves for heavenly joyes and enjoyments. We have never looked well upon or in this Glass, till we have mended our dresse, and are become better and more beautifull by looking in it.

J O B, Chap. 37. Vers. 19, 20.

19. Teach us what we shall say unto him, for we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness.

20. Shall it be told him that I speak? if a man speak, surely be shall be swallowed up.

Elibu having (in the former part of the Chapter) rehearsed many of the wonderful works of God in natural things, beyond his reach, bids Job reach them it he could, or, he invites Job, if he could, to give him some direction, what account to give unto God about them, professing that he hinself knew not, could not tell what to say; telling him also, that he was much assured no man else could; If a manspeak, sirely he shall be swallowed up.

As if Elihu had faid, Now thou hast heard the work of God thus at large discoursed, I appeal to thee, if any man know how to dispute or fault his doings; as for our parts, we cannot tell what to alledge or reply against them, because we cannot see the depth of his wisdom, nor reach the bottom of his administrations. And so the whole context may contain an argument from the less to the greater. If we are ignorant of, or can hardly apprehend these natural things, how much more must we be ignorant of, and unable to search into the secrets and reserved cases of divine Providence? We know little of our selves, how much less of God! That's the general scope and intendment of these two verses.

Vers. 19. Teach us what we shall say, for we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness.

There is a twofold interpretation of the former part of this 19th verse; some expounding it as a serious motion, or a motion in good earnest made by Elibu in his own name, or in the name of those about him, that Job would give them counsel in that matter, Teach us, shew us what we shall say unto him; as sor our parts, we are compassed about with so much darkness, that we know not what to say surther, or more than we have already, about these matters; from whence he would inser or intimate, that much less did he or they about him, know what to say more of Jobs matters,

or of the dealings of God with him. Thus, according to this interpretation, Elihu feemeth to profecute what he spake formerly; I desire to justifie thee, I would gladly undertake the patronage of thy cause, or find out a way how to acquit thee of all those rash speeches, and impatient complaints, that proceeded from thee; but as yet, for my part, I see not how to do it, and therefore, if thou dost, pray shew me.

Irriforie fubdit dicens, oftende nobe, &c. Aquin.

Secondly, And that more generally, these words are expounded, as if in them Elihu had put a kind of flight or scorn upon 106, triumphing and insulting over him, as his inferiour in disputation. As if he had faid, Go to now, O fob; feeing thou thinkest thy self so mise and just, that thou art able to plead and debate thy cause with God himself; teach us, who are nothing to thee, and who ingeniously confess our selves ignorant, how to resolve those questions lately proposed to thy consideration: We are overwhelmed with deep darkness, and have no hope to dispelit, or get out of it, unless thou canst give us light. Thus, I say, the words are generally expounded, as spoken with a kind of stomack, or carrying in them the sense of a secret subsannation; as if Job were more able to see than they all that were about him, as if they were dall and blind, and he alone had the wir. Now you that are so great a Master, and so ready a Teacher, come shew us, play the Master, and act the Tutors part, teach us what we shall say to him.

Age magistrum

But I rather adhere to the former exposition, taking the words as a plain motion, though not altogether without a mixture of reproof. Teach us what we shall say; If thou wouldest have us say anything in thy cause, give us instruction. An Advocate, when his Clyant comes for counsel, tells him, if you would have me plead your cause give me instructions, open your case to me, that I may plead it for you; thus here, teach us, shew us what we shall say, give us directions if thou art able. Tob had said (Chap. 23. 4.) He would order his cause before God, and fill his month with arguments; pray, saith Elihu, give us some of those arguments now; as for me, and those that are with me, we are utterly unprovided what arguments to use, how to argue, how to plead any thing for the justification of thy speeches and behaviour in thy affliction; Therefore teach us what we shall say unto him.

The text is, make us to know. Teaching makes men knowing; he that teacheth another endeavours to conveigh knowledge into

him; and therefore the same word may very well signifie, to teach and make to know, for simuch as the tendency of teaching is for the beginning or for the encreasing of knowledge. Teach w

What we shall say unto him;

That is, to the Almighty. God is the Arrecedent to this Relative he; what shall we say to God in thy defence? we would do our best, our utmost; if we knew how. There are two sorts of perions who

call for teaching.

First, Usually they desire others to teach them, who are convinced or sensible of their own ignorance, and would be delivered from or brought out of it. Thus David prayed that God would teach him, that he would teach him his Statutes (Pfal. 119.33, 66.) The sick man in the 34th Chapter of this Book is represented humbly craving this favour (vers. 32.) That which I see not teach thou me. Here's the true gentus and desire of a learner, he would be taught, he is convinced that he wants knowledge very much or is very ignorant, and therefore he would be taught.

Secondly, Some call upon others to teach them, meerly to convince them of their ignorance and inability to teach them, or to shew that it is a great presumption in them to pretend to the knowledge of such things as they call upon them to teach. In this latter sense we are to understand this desire or motion of Elihn, saying to Job, Teach us what we shall say unto him, that is, what defence we shall make for thee, or what sor our selves, if we were in thy case, or had such a mind to plead with God, as thou hast express more than once. Elihu moves Job to teach them, knowing that he was not able to teach them, or to let him know that he had not knowledge enough to toach them in that matter. Teach us what we shall say unto him,

For we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness.

A facie tenebrarum. Heb.

In this latter part of the verse Elbu gives Job a reason why he and his fellows would (though they knew he could not teach them) be taught by him. As if he had said, we plainly and clearly acknowledge that we are in the dark about these matters, and

Eece

Cannot

Cannot order our speech by reason of darkness.

The word here rendred to order, may have a double allusion; First, To a Military;

Secondly, To a Judiciary ordering.

It is an allusion to the Military ordering of an Army or Camp, because words in speech ought to be put into good order, to be

duely ranked and drawn our as fouldiers to battel.

They also that have to do in Causes and Courts of Justice ought to order their words aright, they mult not speak at random, or what comes next, but they must weigh the plea they make, and pur every thing in its due place. Thus faith Eliha here, We cannot order our speech, we cannot tell how to draw up our reasons, we are over-matcht in this business, we know not how to plead before God in thy case, nor what defence to make for thee; thou pretendest to be able to contend with him, but we are not, we cannot order our speech. Why not?

By reason of darkness.

It is darkness that usually hinders the putting of things in order: Darkness in the Air doth so, much more darkness of the Understanding. There must be light of one kind or other for the ordering of every matter. Where darkness is there must needs be confusion: and therefore Elihu gives a very good account, why they could not order their speech, when he saith, We cannot do it by reason of darkness. What darkness? there is a twofold da kness,

First, There is darkness proper, or natural. Once there was darkness, because light was not come or created; of that Moses speaks (Gen. 1. 3, 4.) Darkness was upon the face of the deep. Now there is darknessevery night, caused by the departure of light, or the going down of the Sun; as also sometimes by the Eclipse of the Sun (Matth. 27. 45.) There was darkness over all the land, when Christ was crucified. It was not this kind of darkness, that hindred Elibu from ordering his speech; for a man may order his speech though he have neither Sun-light nor Candle-light; a man needs no other light, but that of Reason and Understanding to order his speech by.

Secondly, Darkness in Scripture is taken improperly and metaphorically; and so we are to understand it here, We cannot order

eur speech by reason of darkness. And this darkness, which I call im-

proper or metaphorical, is of several kinds.

First, Trouble and sorrow in Scripture language are called darkness (Psal. 18. 28.) Thou, O Lord, wilt lighten my darkness, that is, thou wilt bring me out of a sorrowful, into a joyful state. (Foel. 2. 2.) It is a day of darkness; what is that? a day of trouble and assistant. Hence the state of the damned in Hell is called darkness, yea, utter darkness (Math. 22. 13.) because it is a state of sorrow, even of everlasting sorrows. This darkness of sorrow and trouble will hinder a man very much from ordering his speech. He that is compassed about with, especially if discomposed by sorrow, is unsit to speak before men of understanding; yer, I conceive, this was not the darkness here meant.

Secondly, Darkness in Scripture notes the state of a natural man, as unregenerate and without faith. Te were sometimes darkness, saith the Apostle (Eph. 5.8.) that is, ye were sometimes unconverted, or in a state of nature, which is called darkness, not only there, but often elsewhere (1 Theff. 5. 4.) Brethren, ye are not in darkness, that is, ye are not in a finful condition, grace hath thined unto you, yea, it hath shined into you, or as the Apostle speaks (2 Cor. 4.6.) it hath shined in your hearts, to give you the light of the knowledg of the glory of God, in the face of Festes Christ; he it was who came on purpose into the world, as to give life to them that were dead, so to give light to them that fit in darkness (Luk. 79.) 'Tis a truth also that this kind of darkness doth exceedingly hinder a man in speaking, especially when some things are to be spoken. He that is in the darkness of a natural condition, will be to feek (as we fay) or knoweth not how to order his speech before God, in any spiritual matter. Yet, neither is this here meant; for Elihu was not a man in this kind of darkness, he was doubtless a godly man, a man that had much acquaintance with, and in the things of God: Therefore it was not because of this darkness that he could not order his speech before God.

Thirdly, Darkness is put for the deserted estate of a godly man (Isaiah. 50. 10.) Who is among you that search the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his servant (he that doth so is surely a godly man, or in the state of grace; who is there of this fort among you) that walketh in darkness, and hath no light, God having with-drawn the light of his countenance from him? Now is a very great truth

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(and fadly experienced by some) that this kind of darkness doth exceedingly hinder a man from ordering his speech before God. A poor soul, that is walking in the darkness of a spiritual, troubled, deserted state, that is bewildred with sear and doubt about the savour of God to him, and his acceptance with him, knoweth not what to do or say before God, he knoweth not how to order his speech in prayer or discourse. This darkness hindereth us mightily in ordering our speech before God. Yet I conclude, that neitner is this the darkness here understood, which is a darkness sollowing upon the present going down or setting of the San of Righteonsness upon the foul, who was himself once thus grievously benighted, when nayled to the Cross, he cryed out, my God, my God, why hast thou for saken me.

Fourthly, Darkness is taken for that remaining ignorance or impersection of knowledge which abides even in the best, in the holyest of men after their conversion, while on this side Heaven. This ignorance is darkness (1 Cor. 13.9) and this is that darkness which Eliku here intends, when he saith, we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness. As if he had said, Though I, and they with me, are not altogether rude nor ignorant of God and his wayes; though we have received (through grace) a competency of divine light, to guide us through this world, yet we are sensible of so much dimness and darkness, that we cannot order our speech before God, nor direct our selves what to say for thee, as thou hast

handled the matter.

Further, The darkness that (as Eliha saith) hindereth man in ordering his speech before God, may be taken, not only for the darkness of the man, or of the person speaking, as hath been shewed already, but also for the darkness of the matter, or of the things about which he is called or occasioned to speak. As there is a darkness of the Subject, so a darkness of the object, which David thus expressed (Psal. 49. 4.) I will utter dark sayings upon the harp: And again (Psal. 78. 2.) I mill open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old. A parable is a dark saying, that is, a mysterious saying, a sentence not obvious to every understanding; there is a secret in parables (Prov. 1. 5, 6.) A man of understanding shall attain unto wise consels, to understand a proverb (or parable) and the interpretation, the words of the wise and their lark sayings. When Elihu saith, We cannot order our speech by reason

reason of darkness, we may take it in this latter sense, as well as in the former; for as there is, and will be, some mixture of darknels with light in our minds, till we come to that inheritance of the Saints in light (Col. 1.12.) fo there may be a darkness in the matter to be spoken of. Some truths are so mysterious, secret and hidden, they are so obscure, or lye so deep, that they are, by us, even unsearchable and unperceivable; and then we cannot order our speech about them by reason of their darkness, though possibly our felves may have attained some good measure of light. And as there are many things in the doctrine of Faith very dark to us, for also in those dealings of God with us, which reach our sense; we fee and feel that which we know not how to give a reason or an account of. The light of the Sun is clear and shines into our eyes, yet there is a difficulty to understand the nature of Light, We are in the dark, even about Light it self; how much more are we in the dark about the hidden and dark works of God, in many of his dispensations towards the children of men! And surely then, we cannot order our speech (concerning them) by reason of darkness.

Hence note; First (taking darkness in the improper sence) Ignorance is darkness.

If that ignorance which remaineth after conversion be darkness, then surely much more is that which dwelleth in a natural man unconverted. Knowledge is the light of the mind : The understanding, if furnished with knowledge, is as the Sun in the Firmament; but a man who hath no knowledge nor understanding, is like the Air without the Sun, nothing but darkness; and so much ignorance as abideth in any man, so much darkness abideth in him. The natural man is altogether ignorant, as to the understanding of spiritual things spiritually, that is, savingly, and therefore he (as to them) is altogether darkness, he is (as Job spake in another case of a land, Chap. 10. 22.) a man of darkness, as darkness it self, and in him the light is as darkness; he cannot see by reason of darkness, nor can he speak, to purpose, of the things of God, though he may speak very wisely about the things of the world, by reason of darkness, or because his very Reason (which is the natural light of man) is darkened.

There are fix things, which a natural man, by reason of this darkness, cannot see to order, neither his speech nor his person about. First, First, He cannot see what he should be, and what he is commanded to be, holy, just and righteous.

Secondly, He cannot see what he should do, or is commanded

to do, just and righteous things.

Thirdly, By reason of this darkness he cannot see, what he ought not to do, or is commanded not to do, unjust, evil and unrighteous things. He hath not a discerning about either the affirmative or the negative part of divine commandments; and hence it comes to pass, that as he doth not what he ought, so he doth what he ought not.

Fourthly, By reason of this darkness, it must needs be, that he cannot see what he hath done against the commandment, his sins of commission, nor what he hath neglected to do according to the

commandment, his fins of Omission.

Fifthly, If so, he cannot see what he ought to repent of, and turn from. Some repent not of that which they see to be evil, but no man can repent of that, in particular, which he seeth not to be evill. I grant every godly man makes it his dayly work, to repent of his unknown sins, as well as of those which he knows (Pfal. 19.12.) Who can understand his errours? that is, all the errours, wandrings and mistakes of his life; and therefore David prayed in the close of the verse, cleanse thou me from secrets faults, that is, from those faults and failings which are secrets to me, or which I know not of. But though a man may truly repent of his unknown sins, yet no man repents of sin, who doth not know sin.

Sixthly, By reason of darkness a man doth not see, nor knowes he the things that he hopes for; he possibly hath great hopes of heaven, or of eternal life, yet knowes not in any measure what they are indeed, nor how to order his speech about either, because he is in darkness. So then, the state of an unregenerate person is darkness, and therefore he cannot see at all, and much darkness may remain in a person regenerate, and therefore he cannot see all (1 John 1.5.) God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all; but though the people of God have light and are light, yet in them there is darkness. And because wheresever ignorance is, there is darkness, according to the degree of that ignorance, we may take these Inferences from it.

First, To be in an ignorant condition is to be in a very uncertain condition, for such are in darkness. Now, as Christ speaketh (John

12.35.)

In what an uncertain condition is that man who is dayly going, yet knows not whether he goeth? whether he be going right or wrong, whether he be going for his good or for his hurt, whether he be going homeward or from home, whether he be going to a pallace or a prison, whether to life or death, to heaven or hell. Thus 'cis with a man in darkness, and proportionable to the darkness that is in any man, is the uncertainty of that mans condition; and therefore till a man be got out of this darkness of ignorance, he is in a very uncertain condition, he knoweth not whither he is going, though he be certainly going downward, and that to detiruction.

Secondly, If ignorance be darkness, in what degree soever it is, then, ignorance is very dangerous. Darkness subjects us to danger. As a man is in an uncertain condition while he is in darkness, so in a dangerous condition. If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch. O how dangerous is the state of that man who is altogether in darkness! We find these two put together (Isa. 9. 2. repeated Matth. 4.16.) To them that sate in darkness, and in the valley of the shadow of death, is light risen up. How near are they to danger, who are even in the valley of the shadow of death? Thus 'tis with those that are in a state of darkness; and so far as darkness is in any man, he is in danger to be missed, and to erre both in opinion and practise. Woe to those who, when light is come into the world shall be sound loving darkness rather than light (Joh. 3. 19.) these are in the greatest danger, the danger of condemnation, yea, this is the condemnation.

Thirdly, To be in an ignorant condition, is to be in a very uncomfortable condition; darkness is uncomfortable. And though
such as are in spiritual darkness are not sensible of their danger
(and therefore take up their comforts, rejoyce in the creature,
and sing care away) yet their danger is not the less, but more; and
when once a man is made sensible of his darkness, he is compast
about with many seares, doubts and forrows, &c. The darkness
of the night is very uncomfortable, in comparison of the light of the
day; what then is the darkness of sin and ignorance, in comparison
of the light of grace and of the knowledge of God! And there-

fore we should,

First, Pity the ignorant, those especially who are totally igno-

rant and alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, as the Apostle describes them (Epb. 4.18.) We pity those that are bodily blind, because (as we say) they are dark, they cannot see the Sun; urely, if bodily darkness, or the darkness of the bodily eye, be to be pittied, if such are to be prayed for that they may receive sight, how much more is the darkness of the soul to be pittied, and the blindness of the mind! and therefore are others to pity them the more, because they (not seing their danger, nor

their mifery by it) do not at all pity themselves.

Secondly, If ignorance be darkness, and that an uncertain, a dangerous and an uncomfortable condition, then we should use and improve all the means we can, or, within our compass, for the curing of our own souls and others of this evil; how should they that are in a state of ignorance desire knowledge! The great end of sending the ministry of the Gospel to any people, is to open their eyes, and turn them from this darkness to light (Acts 26. 18.) Christ saith to the Church of Landicea, in that case (Rev. 3.18.) I counsel there to anoint thy eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see; that is, use those means that are proper for the gaining of true knowledge in the things of God. Thou pretendest to have knowledge, but thy darkness is more than thy light, and thy ignorance more than thy knowledge; therefore I counsel thee to buy of me eye-salve, that thou mayest see.

Secondly, Forasmuch as Elihu saith, We cannot order our speech by reason of darkness; we, though knowing men, know not what

to fay.

Note:

There is much darkness remaining in those that have most light in this world.

They that know much and have the clearest sight, are yet dark in many things; what they see is but little to what they see not (1 Cor. 13.9.) We know but in part, and (vers. 12.) We see through a glass darkly. The sight that we have of things, though in a Gospel-way, is but a kind of dark sight, me see through a glass darkly. Elihas saw himself compast about with much darkness; and who may not find darkness yet abiding in him? What-ever our light or knowledge is, all that we know is not half so much as that which we know not; this should humble us. We are very apt to

be proud of that knowledge we have (Knowledge puffs up) but did we remember how much ignorance is mixed and amassed with our knowledge, how much darknels with our light, we should fee little reason to be proud of it, or puffe up with it.

Take these Inserences of duty from this second Note.

First, We should alwayes be praying for Light. Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights: If we would have light from the Father of lights we must ask it.

Secondly, Let the most seeing take heed of presuming that they see all. Some think they know enough, yea, that they have all knowledge, what is it that they know not? But Elihu and his friends faid well, We cannot order our speech by reason of darkness. Do not say Bernardus you know all, how much soever you know. It is an old rule and a non vidit ontrue one, whether you take it with respect to actions or propositi- nia. ons, The wifest man feeth not all. And one of the Ancients hath In his qua dirightly taught us, That the best and highest point of our knowledge, curtur de Desisto confess our ignorance in the things of God.

Thirdly, If the darkness of ignorance be not quite dispelled vamian: sateri. from the most enlightened and knowing souls, Then, As they who Cyril, Cat. 6. have received most light of knowledge, have cause enough to be hum-

bled in themselves, so to beware of despising others.

Thirdly, When Elibu faith, We cannot order our speech by reason of darkness,

> Observe; Ignorance is a very great hinderance in our approaches and addresses to God.

As God himself is light, so they who come to God, need much light: They need light,

First, About their own condition.

Secondly, About the dispensations of God under which they

Thirdly, About the nature and tenour of the Covenant.

Fourthly, About the nature and divine properties of God, with whom they have to do.

Fifthly, About the excellency, faithfulness and all-sufficiency

of Christ, who hath done all for them.

Sixthly, About the freeness of the grace of God towards them. Ffff Seventh-

maxima scient

Seventhly, About the power and working of grace in them, especially of that grace of Faith.

If we want the grace of Faith, we know not how to order our peech before God, nor can we come to God without faith (Heb. 11.6.) & if we want the knowledge of these things, we must needs want taith in thent, or rather in God concerning them. A darkfoul is a confused soul; how then is it possible that he should order his speech before God, who is himself consuled & out of order? Persons must be well composed, before their actions, speeches or addresses can. Therefore if you would have free access to God, and order your speech before him aright, labour for a clear light, or as the Apostle speakes (Col. 2. 3.) for the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; that is (as I conceive) of God the Father, in and through his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. That sthe great study, and glory of Christians; they have the most excellent subject in the world to study upon, and grow up in the knowledge of. Other Sciences consider and contemplate the Creature, and the things of this Life; but Christianity winds up the soul to the meditation of the Creator in the Mediator, whom to know is Eternal

Fourthly, As darkness is considered in the Object,

Note ;

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Thethings of God are so my sterious, that we know not how to speak of them as we ought: Or, There is a darkness in the Word, Wayes and Works of God, which we cannot overcome.

The best have not light enough to look through all the darkness and obscurity that is in the Works and Word of God. I do not affirm this, to cast that reproach of obscurity upon the Word of God, which the Papists do: The Word of God hath in it abundance of light, yez, it is a light; there is enough in it so plain, that any who have any true light, may see much of it, and be able to order their speech, comfortably and competently, that is, acceptably, before God about it. Yet there is a mysterious darkness in many parts of the Word and Works of God, which our light is not clear enough to master and get through. God hath purposely done and spoken some things, which stand as secrets, which our

eye cannot pierce into, that he might keep us low and little in our own eyes. As there is enough in the Word, which the fin plest may understand and speak of to salvation, so there are some things there to pose the witest, and hold them in a silent admiration. The Apostle Peter (2 Epist. 3.16.) speaking about the Epissles of Paul, laith, In them there are some things hard to be understood: He doth not say, all things in the Episiles of Paul are hird to be understood, but some things are, and they are so for our exercise and tryal. As those things are altogether secrets to us, which God hath not revealed, so some things are in a great degree fecrets to us, though God hath revealed them; and

Toen, First, Let us believe when we cannot understand. Faith hath a knowledge about all general Principles; yet he that hath no more Faith in some special Scripture-Principles and Mysteries than he bath knowledge, will have but little Faith in them. Though we must have a knowledge about every thing we believe, yet we may be much more in believing many things, than we are in knowing them; we may have much Faith in that, of which we have but little knowledge. As Faith is the evidence of those things which cannot be feen at all by the eye of fence, fo it is the evidence of somethings to us, which are very little feen by the eye of the understanding. The blessed Virgin said, How shall this be? When the was told the should have a Son, she could not understand the thing, there was a darkness in it, yet she believed

Secondly, When we find darkness in the Works or Truths of God, which are the Object of our Faich, Let us adore what we cannot see, and admire where we cannot apprehend.

Thirdly, When we find darkness in any of the works of God, Let us be sure to forbear to censure or question those works. How vain a thing is it to judg, when we do not understand, or to say that is not done well, which we know not how it is done! Doubtless, We cannot order our speech (about such things) before God, by reason of darkness; and therefore we should tremble to speak

rashly or hardly of them, Elihu heightens the poynt yet surther

Pfff 2

in the next words.

Vers. 20. Shall it be told him that I speak? if a man speak, surely he shall be smallowed up.

I find another rendring of these words, in such a tenour as this; Is there any need that he should be told what I speak? As if Elibu's meaning were, that God, being omniscient and every where prefent, needeth not any to bring him a report what men say or do : he knows our doings, and hears all our fayings, though none tell him. I hearkned and heard (faith the Lord, Fer. 8. 6.) He that planted the ear, shall be not hear? he that formed the eye, shall be not see ? If any man behave himself amis, or speak amis, God feeth it, God heareth it. The Omnipotent needs no helper, the Omniscient needs no in'ormer, no intelligencer, to bring him an account of what is done or spoken: Is there any need (faith Elibu, according to this reading) that be should be told what I speak? We render

Shall it be told him that I fpeak?

Verbo forena videnur u.us Effe initio ver-

re quum locutus fuero sic ; nempeut tu locutus es de gubernatione Det.

Here some, instead of the word told translate record; shall it be recorded, regilfred or written in a book, that I speak, that is, that I have undertaken thy cause as thou hast stated it? Shall this be rebitter, vel in corded, and the record fent to God, that I intend to be thy Adalla referretur, vocate? littely no; neither I, nor any man of wildome or difcretion will undertake to pak in this matter, after thy manner. An aliquis au. Shall it be told him that I speak? I dare not, I would not have it debit ei narra- told him that I will, for a World.

> Hence Note, First : No man who understands kimflf, will venture upon the doing or speaking of any this of that may provoke God, or be difpleasing to him.

Will any wife man be an Advocate to plead a Cause, which he knows will, upon just grounds, offend and distast an earthly Judg? The Preacher (fairh Solomon, meaning himfelf, Ecol. 12. 10.) sought to find out acceptable words; the Hebrew is, words of delight, or, words of the will: He meaneth not flattering words, or men-pleasing words, but such words as may profit men, or please men for their profit, that is (as the Apostle speaks, Rom. 15. 2.) for their good to edification. Now, if we should not provoke men,

but feek to find out (in the sence given) words acceptable to them, should we not much more take heed of speaking any thing to the provocation of God? Chould we not seek to find out words of delight and acceptation with him, words of his Will, that is, words every way agreeable to his holy will?

Secondly, As Elihu feared such a report should be made to

God,

Note; It is high presumption to do or speak amiss, not fearing God should know of it.

We are afraid to do that evil which may be reported to great persons, who have power to punish us: If such a man be told (say fome) what we have done, what will become of us? Many are not afraid to do evil, who yet are afraid it should be told their betters what evil they have done. Servants will fortimes thus check children in a Family, when they have done amis, We will tell your Father, we will do your errand to your Mother; that's a dreadful word to a child that hath any reverence of Father or Mother, to tay, I will tell your Father and Mother of you. The Lord knoweth all that we do amiss (as was said before) though no man tell him; but shall it be told to God what such and such men speak or do, and will they speak or do it still ? shall it be told God what they speak, and against whom they speak? thall it be told God whom they reproach, whom they revile? and will they venture it? 'Tis dangerous when such Tales are truly told in the ears of God against the men of the World; they were better have Talestold, and reports made against them to all the Princes of the earth, than have reports made to God against them. To have a poor foul, upon just grounds, telling God what evil men have done against him, how they have slandred and reproached him, how they have oppress and vext him, will come at last to a fad account against them. Shall it be told God that I speak? (faith Elibs) And shall it be told God that we do evil, and we regard it not? Shall we answer those that tell us, they have told, or will tell God of our evil doings, as impudent children and servants do fuch as threaten them with telling their Parents and Masters of their evil doings, What care we? do if you will? O let us take heed how we do or speak that, which, if told in the ears of God,

may cause blame, and bring his displeasure upon us. There are a fort of Tale-bearers very odious in the fight of God and all good men; fuch are spoken of, Prov. 11. 13. Prov. 18 8. But they who bring reports to Gcd (as Joseph did to his Father Jacob, concerning his brethren, Gen. 37. 2.) of the evils done by men, fuch Tale-bearers (if I may so call them) do but their duty; and as their reports are accepted with God, so they hasten wrath upon evil men (Luke 18.7.) Shall it be told bim that I speak?

If a wan speak, surely be shall be swallowed up.

Si dixerit, Heb

That is, if any man speak, if a wife man speak, and if he speak scil. apudse, il- as wifely as he can, and place his words in the best order he can, lud nampe, se yet if he thall defire (as fob hath done) to come near unto God, velletalemser- and plead with him, surely he shall be swallowed up. Job, in the narrare. Pisc. hottest of those desires to plead with God, did not (as hath formerly been noted in favour of him) challenge God; he did not think himself a March for God in pleading his cause before him, he (good man) was far from such a presumptuous spirit: yet becausehe insisted so much upon that defire of pleading his cause with God, Eliba had reason to check him in such language as this, If a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up. We that are dust and ashes may not be so bold with God, 'tis best for us to lye at his foot, and let him do what he will with us, only beg of him that we may improve his dealings, and profit by his corrections; if the wifest and holiest of men shall speak otherwise, Surely they Chall be

Swallowed up.

The word implies, that a man fo speaking shall be ruined and brought to nought. Mr. Broughton tenders, Would any man plead when he shall be undone? No man but a mad man would speak in a business wherein he must needs be ruined. We say well, smallowed up, that is, both he and his understanding shall be utterly confounded. This phrase of speech is often used in Scripture when a greater power undertakes a leffer: thus fire swallowerh up stubble, and oppressors their poor underlings. David saith of his enemies, with respect to the greatness of their malice (Pf 56.1.Pf.57.3) They would swallow me up. Possibly they had not power enough to do it, or no fitting opportunity to do it, but they wanted no will to do it, They would swallow me up if they could, that is, they would make an utter end of me, or dispatch me quite. So this word is ufed in several other places (Isa. 28.7.) They are swallowed up of wine. Some swallow down the wine so long, till the wine swalloweth them up, the wine gets the mastery over them, and they are no longer (as we speak proverbially) their own men. The Apofile gives order concerning the incestuous person that had been cast out of the Church (2 Cor. 2.5.) receive him (faith he) lest he be swallowed up of over-much sorrow, that is, lest sorrow get the maftery of him. It is not good that the floods of forrow (though it be a forrow for fin) should prevail over us, so as to fwallow us up in the gulph of despair. Again, while the Apofile affures us, and would have us triumph in that affurance, that death shall never do a godly man any hurt, he thus expresseth it (I Cor. 15, 54.) Death is swallowed up in victory, that is, in and by the victory of Folus Christ: He, by dying, quite overcame death; he did not only wound it, and worst it, or get the better of it, or rout ir, but totally ruin dir, as to any power of hurting us; all which, and whatfoever elfe concerns the death of death, and the destruction of the grave, is wrapt up in that one word, Death is swallowed up in victory. And therefore also it is said by the same Apostle, (2 Cor. 5. 4.) Mortality shall be swallowed up of Life. Jesus Christ hath brought in such a life through the Gospel, as shall at last put an utter end to Mortality. Our Mortality now by degrees purs an end to, or swalloweth up our Lives, but then Life will quite swallow up, or put an end to our Mortality; that is, our Mortality shall be quite removed and taken out of the way, by that Life which Christ hash purchased for his people by his own dearb. All these Scriptures shew the force of the word, here used by Elibu, when he faith, If a man speak, surely he shall be smalloned up.

If a man (peak;

How? or to whom? The answer is, If a man speak to God, he shall be swallowed up. But shall every one that speaks to God be swallowed up? Not so; therefore we must go to the manner of speaking. If a man speak to God, not keeping his distance, if a man speak to God without a Mediatour, he shall be swallowed up, as a drop of water is swallowed up of the Ocean, or as a spark

Kerdetur vir ille fulgore cel-Judinis & Majestatu

tur a gloria.

Vulg.

spark of fire is swallowed up in a great flame, or as the light of a Candle, or Glow-worm, is swallowed up by the Sun; there is no standing for the Creature before God, in such a nearness of access. ejus perfristus but by faith in a Mediator; If a man speak he shall be swallowed up. Man is no march for God, or he is a most unequa murch.

Yet further, these words may note the conquest of the mind or understanding of man, by an object which is too high and excellent for it; for then his thoughts, yea and his Reason too, are swallowed up, and he is carried out of himself, as a man in an extastie or trance. When Sr. Paul was caught up to the third heavens, and heard unspeakable words, he was swallowed up with the greatness of the matter, and was in a divine extafte, whether in the body he could not tell, or whether out of the body he could not tell (2 Cor. 12. 2, 3, 4.) Thus (faith Eliha) thall that man be swallowed up, who over-boldly speaks to God about the great mysteries of previdence, or about any matter too high for him. And therefore, O Fob, thou halt not done well to speak so often of pleading with God; and furely, if any man after thy example, speak complainingly of what God hath done, or himself hath suffered at the hand of God, he is sure to be undone, He shall be swallowed up.

> Hence observe; Man is not able to bear the Glory and Majesty of

God dwels in the light which no man can approach unto (I Tim. 6.16.) Mans darkness is not able to comprehend Gods light; if he venture too near it, he will foon be swallowed up. The vulgar Qui perscruta- Latine renders that place (Proverbs 25. 27.) He that is a searfor est Maje- cher of Majesty shall be oppressed by the Glory; that is, who soever flath opprime-searcheth boldly into the Majesty of God, shall be swallowed up by the Glory of God. We translate that text in the Proverbs thus, For men to fearch their own glory, is no glory. There is a truth in the former translation, though it be not a true translation, for, a man that searchethinto the Majesty of God, shall be overpowered with his Glory. And as man is soon overpowered, or swallowed up by the Majesty of God, so also by and in the Mysteries of God Christicold his disciples (Fohn 16. 12.) That he had many things to say unto them, which they were not able to bear. If they who had received so much grace, could not bear the deeper mysteries

of the Gospel, spoken to them by Christ cloathed with frail flesh, how much leffe can any man bear the Majesty of God in speaking to him, or, God speaking to him in his Majesty! And so some translate and read the words of Elihu in the text under hand, For if he speak, man shall be devoured or swallowed up; that is, if God speak, man (who before thought himself Some-body, or that he was able to reason with him) will be quite consounded in himfelf by the infinite wisdom of God, his conque will faulter or cleave to the roof of his mouth, and he rendered unable to speak one word in his own defence. Mofes (Exod. 19. 12.) was commanded to fet bounds about Mount Horeb, that the people might not come too neer; the reason was, that the people might by those bounds be warned, not to be curious or over-bold in their approaches to the Majesty of God, nor over-busie in prying into his Secrets. As if it had been faid, if you come to near, you will be even swallowed up. Moses repeating to the Israelites the terrible Majesty of God in giving the Law at Mount Horeb, minds them in what a trembling frame they then were (Dent. 5. 24, 25, 26.) And ye said, behold the Lord our God hath shewed us his glory, and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire; we have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and heliveth (which implieth, that man, in this life, cannot bear the fuller manifestation of God, and live) Now therefore, why should we die? for this great fire will consume us : if we hear the voice of God any more, then we shall die. What was this great fire ? It was God himself, that is, an extraordinary appearance of God, who is several times in Scripture express by fire. As if they had said, We acknowledge that we have had wonderful condescention and mercy from God, that we have heard him speak and live; but, that we live, is not only a mercy but a miracle; therefore we poor wormes dare not run the hazzard a second time, if we hear him speak any more, we shall die: Therefore they defired Moses (who in that was a type of Christ, Gal. 3.19.) to go near, and be as a Mediator between them and God, that they might not have to do with God immediately, but receive the Law by his hand. Such is the infinite Majesty of God (though it will be our blessednesse in the next life, for ever to enjoy it) that here in this Life we are not able to receive it. The Glory of God is so pure, that man cloathed with corruptible flesh & blood cannot stand before it; the Gggg

very glimples of it altonish, and leave us for dead, Rev. 1. 16, 17. Man must dye before he can see God and live; his body must be glorished before, he can bear that weight of glory, which consists in beholding the face of God, or, in knowing him (in our proportion) as we are known (1 Cor. 13.12.)

But though (as the Israelites there said of themselves) we cannot hear God speak and live, yet cannot we speak to God and

live, or, and not be swallowed up?

I answer it in these three things. First, It a man speak to God, as questioning his dealings with him, or, as calling God to an account (which in some sence Job did, and therein went beyond his line) he shall be swallowed up.

Secondly, If any man speak to God, as presuming that he can compals, fathom, and understand God, or all the dealings of God with man, that man shall surely be swallowed up. The thoughts of God are above our thoughts, and his mayes above our mayes,

as high as the heaven is above the earth, Ita. 55.9.

Thirdly, If we speak to God in our own name, or in a selfright-controlle, then also we shall surely be swallowed up. Job
(as we have acquitted him before) never attempted to speak to
God in his own right-consesse, though he often magnissed his
own right-consesse both before and towards men. Woe to all
the right-consesse of man before the most right-consesse God. But
Job was too bold (according to the first answer) in asking an
account, or a reason of God, concerning his sufferings; there
was his failing, and for that he received this check by Elihu, If
a man speak, he shall be swallowed up.

The meanest, the pootest believing soul may come and speak, and speak boldly to God in the name of J sus Christ (Heb. 4.

16.) Thus we may come and welcome, coming thus we shall not be swallowed up with the M i sty, much lesse with the wrath or displeasure of God. If coming thus we are swallowed up, it will be only with the love and savous of God, with the goodnesse and kindnesse of God: And to be swallowed up thus, will be the sweetest morsel that ever we swallowed, even persect blessednesse and life for ever more. When once death is swallowed up in visto y, and mortality of life, then shall we be swallowed up in glory. And therefore whas over the Lord doth with us or ours in this world, let us be silent before him, humbly

humbly adoring his Soveraignty and Wildom, not in the least questioning either his Righteousnesse or his Goodnesse; for if a man speak so, Surely he shall be dreadfully smallowed up.

J O B, Chap. 37. Verf. 21, 22.

- 21. And now men see not the bright light which is in the Clouds: but the wind passeth and cleanseth them.
- 22. Fair weather cometh out of the north: With God is terrible Majesty.

The two verses last opened, may be taken as a Parenthesis to the former discourse concerning Gods wonderful works in nature, forming those dreadful impressions of Thunder and Lightening, Storms & Tempest, in the Air; whereby Elihu having repress (ashe supposed) the swelling of Jobs spirit, by calling him to teach them what to say to God in his cause, for they (as he had handled it) could not order their speech, by reason of darkness, nor durst Elihu venture that it should be told God, he intended to speak, knowing, or foreseing that if he made such an attempt, he might soon be swallowed up by the incomprehensible greatness and glory of God.

Elihu, I say, having made this little diversion, or digression (as he had done sometimes before) to coole and calme the spirit of fob, he returns to his former matter, in these words, and considers further the works of God, in those higher Regions, the Aireal heavens, how ne mussles up, and covers the light, and how he unvailes and opens it again by his own power, and according to the pleasure of his will. The words are plain, according to our translation; I shall open them breisly as they are here set down, and then give out a further reading of them, which raises the scope

and intendment of Elihu yet higher.

Verf. 21, And now men see not the bright light which is in the

And now. Some have conjectured, that at this very instant of time while Eliha was discoursing, there happened a sudden change in the Air, or in the face of the Heavens; therefore he faith, and now, do not the heavens grow dark, so that men cannot see the bright light which is in the Clouds? as if here were a preparation to that Whirlwind or Tempest, out of which God himself is said to speak to fob, at the beginning of the next chapter.

Yet, I apprehend, we need not expound the word [now] fo strictly, with respect to the present season or moment of time, but rather to the present matter; as we often use that particle Now, both in speech and writing, not so much to denote the direct instant, or present time, as for a leading word to the matter which

is to follow.

And now men fee not (or they cannot fee) the bright light which is in the Clouds.

Light is the most visible thing in the world; though indeed we are not so properly said to see the Light at all, as to see all things by the light; for it is Light which maketh manifest, as the Apostle speaks (Ephes. 5. 13.) But though Light be (in vulgar fense) so visible in its own nature, and (in Arichelt sense) that which maketh all things visible, yet by accident, or by some providential interposition, light it self is not alwayes to be feen. Light is often hidden from our eyes, and then (as Elihu speakes here) men see not the bright light. The word which we translate bright light, signifies the whiteness of Snow, and I find it applied (Levit 13.2.) to the whiteness of Leprosie; if there (hall appear in the flesh a bright (or thining) spot, a spot like Candens lepra. Inow, then, &c. And hence it is said of Gehazi (2 Kings 5. 27.) that when his mafter called him to account about his going after Naaman, & found him flactering and faulty, he laid that fore judggregie splendi- ment upon him, The leprosie therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto dum & candi- thee and unto thy seed for ever; and he ment out of his presence a ledumesse. Rab. per as white as Snow. It is this word, which fignifies, as any extraordinary whiteness and clearness, so the clearness and whiteness of Snow in particular, which hath a kind of transparency in it, and is full of light: Yet the light which is in the Clouds when the Sun fhinerh.

בדויד Proprie candidus, unde Proprie denotat

An Exposition upon the Book of] O B. Verf. 21. 597 Chap. 37. Thineth, is much more bright than Snow. Now, men fee not the bright light

Which is in the Clouds,

Or, in the Skie; for the word here used (as hath been shewed before) fignifies the Skie, the Firmament, and somtimes the Air, as well as the Clouds, and it imports the natural thinnels of these Coclestial Bodies, in that higher and upper Region of the Athera remui World. Men see not the bright light which is in the Clouds. Light ejus fubstantia, is properly in the Sun; the Sun is the vessel, the vehicle, the seat, nam prove the chariot of Light; but as Light is in the Sun subjectively, so minutes. Drussel, Light is in the Clouds objectively, and also as they are a Medium. Light is in the Clouds objectively, and also as they are a Medium through which the Light is conveighed and passeth to us. Yet somtimes men see not that bright Light which is in the Clouds, for Clouds being very thick or thickened, they become to us as an opacous Body, through which the Light can neither find nor make its way, and then there's no beholding the Light of the Sun shining upon them in its greatest brightness; while the Air is thus Clouded, Men see not the bright Light which is in the Clouds.

God can make that which is most visible in it felf, invisible.

There is alwayes bright Light in the Air, when and where the Sun is up, and gotten above the Horizon. The Sun thines continually, how dark soever the weather be; but God can draw such a Curtaine of Clouds, Vapours and Mists, in the day time, between us and the bright face of the Sun, that we cannot behold it. Light alwayes is, but Light is not alwayes to be feen; when Clouds

come between, the Sun is darkened in the clear day.

We may infer as a further improvement of natural things, to those which are spiri ual, That the light of God's face, or countenance, that is, the light of his favour, thines ever towards his faithful fervants, though it be not alwayes feen, Clouds coming between may shadow them from that bleffed Light (Pfal. 97.2.) Clouds and darkness are round about him, that is, his differnations are dark and cloudy; yet, as then, Righteousness and Judgement are the habitation of his Throne, that is, as then he doth right to all forts of men, so, then also Mercies and Loving-kindnesse stand round about his Throne, or, as the Apostle expresserhit (Heb. 4. 16.) his Throne is then, A Throne of Grace, that is, he hath Grace or Favour in his heart, to bestow upon all his People, who come to him, not with a prefuming, but a believing boldness. Our fins and transgressions are called, a Cloud, a thick Cloud (112. 44. 22.) I have blotted out as a thick Cloud thy transoreffins, and as a Cloud thy fins. Sins are Clouds, and those Clouds often hinder us from seeing the bright light of the face of God il ining upon us; and as our fins usually hinder us from seeing that bright light which is in the face of God, fo God fometimes, to try the graces, the faith, the patience of his people, or to see what they will do, how they will behave themselves in a dark and deserted state (God I (ay, sometimes for these and such like ends) with-draws himfelf, and will not suffer them to see the bright light of his pleased face. As the light of the things of this world, so of that other and better world, is often hid, or the comfort of them is concealed from us. Light is fown for the Righteons; it doth not always spring up and appear to the righteous. Luther chiefly insists upon this mythical interpretation or application of the text, giving it out by way of similitude; As (faith he) the light of the Sun is many times covered with a Cloud, and sometimes hindred by Eclipses, so the light of comfort, or peace and joy in this world, is hidden from the eyes of the people of God; yet by and by he sends a comfortable and powerful gale, to blow away or disperse those Clouds, and then the light of his countenance & favour shines freely upon them again. And let this be remembred, that when their day is a day of darkness and gloominesse, yet the Light shines still, the favour of God is towards them still, though it appeares not; and when they have been a while exercifed under this Da knesse, Light will return as it followeth in the text, Men fee not the bright light which us in the Clouds,

But the wind passeth and cleanseth them.

The wind passeth. Quest. But what is the wind?

Answ. The wind is a hot and dry exhalation, raised from the Earth by the power of the heavenly bodyes, which being repelled or forced back by the coldness of the middle Region, moves obliquely or slantingly, sometimes very violently through the air. The Latine word (ventus) fignifying the wind, is derived by some Gramma-

rians from a word (vehementia) noting the vehement or forcible motion of it, or as others (a veniendo) from a word fignifying to come, because it comes this way and that way, at times every way; or as our bleffed Saviour expressent it (John 3.8.) The mind bloweth where it listeth, and then hearest the sound thereof, but earst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth.

The supream or supernatural cause, both making and moderating or governing the wind, is God himself: For though that text in the Holy Gospel last mentioned saith, The mind bloweth where it listeth, yet is to be understood only in reference to man; it bloweth where it listeth, for all man, man can neither directit, not controlle or check it. But as to God, the wind bloweth where he listeth, not where it self listeth; it is he who gathereth the wind in his sists (Pro. 30. 4.) 'Tis he who bringeth them out of his treasures (Pial. 135.7.)

The natural remote cause of the wind, is the power of the Sun and Starrs (as Philosophers well agreeing with reason tell us) drawing up those exhalations, and attenuating them into a fitness for that purpose.

The natural, neere, or next cause (say they) of the winds, is the coldness of the middle Region, which will not suffer the aspiring exhalation to rise higher, but thrusts it back, and so it moves hither or thither, side-wise, or along this lower Region of the air towards the Earth, doing those services, and somtimes strange ex-

ployts, with which experience acquaints us daily.

By this Meteor, the wind, the life of man is in a great measure maintained. For though it be a truth, that no man can live (as we say) by the air; yet it is as true, that no man can live without the air: Did not the Lungs inspire and expire, draw in and send out fresh air, man would soone be suffocated and dye; and its most certain, that the heart, and blood, and whole body of man, are very much affected, according to the nature of the wind or air, in which they breath. Plinie tells us, that man may live mithous food seven dayes, but no man can live one houre, being wholy intercluded from wind and air. And hence the Latine word (anima) which signifies the soul, not only as to the substance of it, (which is immortal) but as to the substitute of it in the body (in which respect its mortal, being no more than life, this word I say in the Latine) is supposed to come from that Greek word (aveus)

which properly fignifieth the wind. The same notion of life may be collected from the Hebrew word Nephesh, which is indifferently translated, Sonl, Life, Wind. And so the life of man is not only called wind (as Fob called his, Chap: 7. 7.) because of the frailty or speedy passing of it away; but because the continuance or abiding of it in the body, is by the taking in and sending out of wind.

I have already at the 9th verse of this Chapter, shewed the several uses which God hath appoynted the winds unto, both in a way of Mercy, and of Judgment: They purge the air, they gather the Clouds for Rain, they scatter them, and so make faire weather, they move the waters, which otherwise by standing still would putrise, corrupt, and grow unwholsome, yea infectious both to man and beast, they retresh the Earth, and cause all sorts of vegetables to slourish, they are also, as it were, the food and nourishment, the meat and drink of mans life; there's no living without them.

I shall not stay surther to discourse or discover the nature and the wonders, or the wondersull nature of the wind, having done somewhat towards it (as was said) before at the ninth verse. Only take notice of this use of the wind, with respect to the Clouds, mentioned expressly in this Text, The wind passeth

And cleanseth them.

It was faid in that former part of this Chapter (where Eliha spake of the wind) That the winds are the Broomes of Heaven, they fweep the Heavens, they drive away the Clouds, the mists and foggs which dull and obfuscate the air. The expression here in the Text forts well with that Metaphor, The wind paffeth and cleanfeth them, that is, the wind paffing through the air, cleanfeth it from those Clouds, and so causeth the light of the Sun to shine forth freely and fully to us again. The wind at one time gathers the Clouds, and the wind at another time scatters them: The wind is a cleanfer. So much is supposed in that Negative expression (fer. 4 11.) where the Lord threatens to fend a high wind from the Wilderness, but not to fan nor to cleanse. I (saith the Lord) will fend a high wind; but to what purpose? not for those profitable and comfortable purposes, to fan, cool, and cleanse the Air, but rather to wither and blast the fruits of the Earth, or to overthrow

throw and bear down all before it. The text in hand speaks of a comfortable purpose of God in letting the wind out of his Treafures, it bloweth away the Clouds which obstruct the passage of the Light to us: The wind paffeth and cleanfeth them.

What-ever stands in the way of our comforts, God can quickly remove it.

When Clouds cover the light from us, God hath his wind ready to chase them away, and clear up the weather. Never did any fuch thick and dark Cloud of forrow and trouble hang over the heads, or fill the hearts of the people of God, but he had means at hand to dispell and scatter ir, or he could scatter it himself without means. When dreadfull Clouds of danger looked black upon and threatned the Church of God during the Reign of Julian the Apostate, Athanasius said, It is but a little Cloud, a wind will short- Nabecula est, ly cleanse it away. His meaning was, now we are compassed about oild transibit. with fear and trouble, but peace and prosperity will not stay long

before they return.

This is true also if we carry it yet in a more spiritual way, as to those Clouds of forrow which often darken and afflict our minds in the midst of outward prosperity, or in the clearest Sunthine-day of peace that ever was in this world; when these inward Clouds dwell, as it were, upon the foul, the Lord hath a wind which passeth and cleanseth them away too. What is that wind? it is his holy Spirit. The word in the text, is used often to fignifie, not only the natural wind in the air, but that divine wind the Holy Ghost, who is compared unto the wind in many places of Scripture, and his opperations are like those of the wind: For as the wind bloweth where it lifteth, we hear the found thereof, but know not whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth; fo (faith Christ) is every one that is born of the Spirit (John 3.8.) And as our Regener tion is wrought by that secret, yet strong and powerfull wind, fo likewise is our consolation. The Spirit of God doth those effices in our hearts which the winds do in the air: As the wind dispells and fweeps away the Clouds which are gathered there; so the Spirit of God cleanfeth our fouls from those Clouds and foggs of is norance and unbelief, of fin and luft, which are gathered ir, and would, else, abide for ever upon our hearts. From all these Clouds Hhhh

Boldme:

the holy Spirit of God cleanfeth us in the work of Regeneration: And from all those Clouds which trouble our Consciences, the holy Spirit cleanfeth us in the work of Confolation.

Some Interpreters expound the words only in this mystical fense, quite rejecting the proper. But though, by allusion, we may improve the words to this spiritual sense, yet doubtless Elibu speaks here of the winds properly taken, or of the natural winds, and their fenfible effects; and so, according to our reading, this Text, as it hath been opened, teacheth us what fudden changes God makes in the Air. Now the light is shut up, or shut in, and anon it is let out again, and all by the powerful hand of God, who doth administer these things to us interchangeably, as himself

pleaseth.

mines | lucem quas ventus transieus purgavit. Tranflatio Juna

Secondly. The text, according to another reading (which others infilt much upon, and conceive pertinent to the scope of Elihu) Fin enim non sun thus; For now men sannot see the bright light in the Clouds, respicium (ho- when the wind passeth and cleanseth them. Mr Broughton translates (quum) nitida clearly fo, his words are thefe; And now men cannot look upon the est in superiori- light, when it is bright in the Air, then a wind passeth and cleanseth bus mibibus, it. And then the sence of the whole verse is plainly a setting forth of the excellency, or superexcellency rather, of the light of the Sun, which is so clear and splendid, that if the Air be but cleansed from Clouds, if it be but a pure Air, no man is able to face it, nor his eye directly to behold it. We behold all things by the light of the Sun, but no man can stedfastly behold the light in the Sun; no man can look right up to the Sun, when it casts forth its fiery rayes, and thines bright upon us. And this some conceive fo genuine and clear an exposition of the Text, that the light of it may feem to obscure and darken all others. Now, according to this second reading, the whole verse, with that which followeth, contains an argument to confirm the former proposition, laiddown at the 20th verse: If a man speak, he shall be swallowed up, that is, if a man come too nigh unto God, and be over-bold with him, he shal even be swallowed up of his brightness & that it is so, I prove thus (faith Elibu) The very light of the Sun, which shines in the edversis oculis Air, is so bright and so powerful, that no man is able to hold up his mitidum folen eyes against it : And if so, then from the lesser to the greater, his ergo ferat præ- argument riseth thus & If when the Sun shineth brightly, no man is Pentism Maje able to look upon it, then much less are we able to behold the bright Majesty

Nemo potest Bata dei. Jun: Majesty of God, or to comprehend his greatness. This rendring hath a very profitable sense in it, leading fob to reason thus with him-self, I plainly see by all that hath been discoursed, that for as much as I am not able to bear the brightness, which breaks through the Clouds, nor the noise of Thunder (of which Elihu spake before) for as much as I am not able to bear the fierceness of a great Rain, nor the coldness of the Frost, nor the impetuousness of the Wind, nor the violence of a Tempest, for as much as I am not able to bear the clear light of the San shining in my face, therefore surely I am much less able to bear the Majesty and glory of God, if he should unvaile or open himself unto me. Thus I say, Elihu leads Job to an humbling conviction, that he could not stand before the glorious Majetty of God, because he was not able to endure the brightness of the Sun flaining upon him. If the light of the Sun, the Created light, be too excellent for mortal eyes, then what is God the Creating light? what is God, who dwelleth in light, who is light, and in whom there is no darkness at all? Tis a Maxime in Nature, A visible object exceed- Excellens visiing bright, dazles the eye, and even destroys the fight. And why was bile risum de-

Chap. 37.

all this spoken to fob? Surely to bring him upon his knees (as af- struit. terwards it did) to humble him, to take him off from his frequent appeals or defires of approach to God for the debate and determination of his cause. The sum of all in a word is as if Elibu had said, O fob, thou canst not see the bright light of the Air, if the wind do but fan it and cleanse the Clouds, how then shalt thou be able to dispute thy cause before God, to whom the most glorious light of the Sun, is but a Cloud, yeabut as a clod of earth? The next words carry on this conviction yet further.

Vers. 22. Fair weather comethout of the North: with God is terrible Majesty.

The former part of this verse hath a respect to the latter part of the former; The wind paffeth and cleanseth them, fair (or bright) weather cometh out of the North. It hath been shewed before in opening the 9th verse of this Chapter, that the South wind ingenders the Rain, and causeth foule weather ; here (saith Elihu) fair weather cometh out of the North. The North wind (faith Selemon, Pro. 25. 22.) driveth away Rain, fo doth an anory countenance a backbiting tongue. The North wind blows coldly, yet it blowes clearly, it clears the Air from Clouds. We render, Fair meather Hhhhh 2

Aurum.

someth out of the North. The word translated fair weather, fignifieth gold; gold cometh out of the North. Fair weather in its feafon, is worth much gold, and may well be called golden weather; the Sun in such seasons gilds both the Air and Earth with his precious beams. And I find an ancient Interpreter sticking much upon the strict fignification of the Hebrew word, maintaining that gold is to be taken here properly; Out of the North cometh gold, because (saich he) in the Northern Countryes, through the greatness of Cold, the heat in those parts is so pent in the bowels of the Earth, that it more fully concocts and refines the gold, than in other places: Out of the North comes gold, that is, the purest gold. But, I conceive, that was not at all the business of Eliha here; and I find the Scripture in another place expressing that which is shining, beautifull, and precious, by gold, (Zach.4. 1.2.) The oyle which the two Olive-branches emptied out of themselves through the two golden pipes, is called gold, or golden oyle, that is, bright oyle, pure oyle; and so because the light of the Sun shining in fair weather is purer and more defecate than the purest gold, therefore this Scripture expresseth it by gold; through

Lux quovi auro splendidior. Eoz:

> the North a golden cometh, faith Mr Broughton. Again, Some taking the word gold here metaphorically for any pretions thing, take the word North metaphorically also for any exil thing, that is, for any effliction, trouble, or forrow which we meet with in this world; these are indeed as a cold chilling Northwind, and so they will needs give the sence of this Scripture myflically thus, Out of the North cometh precious things; that is, afflictions (which are as a cold chilling North-wind) make us more precious; or, through cold chilling afflictions, we are made more and more precious. Fob faith, and this text may have fuch an allusion (and I give it no further) to that (Chap. 23.10.) When he bath tried me, I shall come forth gold; that is, I shall come forth precious. Whether God doth try us by the North or by the South, whether by the heat of prosperity, or by the cold of adverfacy, if we are under his tryal, and are faithfull, we come out gold. we come out more precious from our tryals, than we came in. The Apostle hath a like allusion (1 Pet. 1. 6, 7.) Ye are now for a season in heaviness (if need be) through manifold temptations, (that is, troubles, tribulations and afflictions) That the triall of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though

though it be tried with fire, might be found to praise, &c. Thus Out of the North comes Gold, or this precious thing, a tryed faith. That's a truth from the allegorical sense of this place; but I shall not stay upon it.

The proper meaning is, Eliha would have Job, and all men know, God hath his feveral Climates or places, out of which he sends and dispenceth fair and foul weather; foul weather cometh

out of the South, and fair out of the North.

Out of the North cometh fair weather.

The Hebrew word rendred North, fignifieth hiding, because IBS obscondit the remote parts of the North are much hidden from the Sun, occultavit, a great part of the year being quite dark; and therefore the Nor-bine Nor-bentrio aquilo, thern Climate may well be called the hidden part of the world. quafi abscondisome put a Question upon those words of David (Psal. 75.6.) ta quia sol ibi Promotion comes neitler out of the East, nor out of the West, nor multo per anfrom the South: Here are three of the foure Winds specified, num temp re and it is said, Promotion comes from neither of them. But why spiciatur. is it not also said, that Promotion comes not from the North? that's the question. I answer, It were answer enough to say, that we ought not to put questions curiously about such things; it should satisfie us that the Spirit of God is pleased to say it is so, and no more. Yet some tell us, the reason why it is not said, Promotion cometh not from the North, is, because indeed it cometh out of the North, which, say they, is intimated in the Hebrew word for the Mirth, which fignifies hidden or feeret. Promotion comes not from the East, nor West, nor South, but from the North, (faith this Author) it comes from the North in a figure or mysterie, that is, it comes from some hidden providence or secret hand, which many take no more notice of, than we do of the furthest part of the North. God promotes many in this world to power, and fends them great prosperity, we see not how or which way: The causes and concrivances of it are hidden close, and in the breast of God. This also is a truth; in that sence we may say, Fair weather cometh from the North. Promotion is visible, but the manner of it is a fecret, we see not the causes for which, nor the wayes in which it cometh. It is enough to touch these niceties, and to touch them can do no hurr, while the matter arising from them, bath the clear consent of, and is harmonious with o-

ther plain places of Scripture. Fair weather cometh out of the North, and (as it followeth)

With God is terrible Majesty.

TIT celsitude majestas : a 779 guidem deducunt, quod lebrare, lauda-टेला रल जेडले μεγάλη ή Jora. Theod: अब्रह हे हे जेबब poßeposativos. Symmach: Ad deum formidolo a laudatio. Vulg:

This is the Epiphonema, the exulting conclusion of both these verses, yea, of Elibu's large discourse concerning the works of God in Naturalls. As if Elihu had faid, All thefe things God doth; and tell me then, is not terrible Majesty with God? in God, or with God is terrible Majesty. The word which we render Majesty, comes (say Grammarians) from a root which fignifies to fels, to acknowledge, to celebrate, because Majesty, Greatness, or Excellency is and ought to be much acknowledged, confest, est consideri, ce- and celebrated: The word notes in general, any laudable or praise-worthy thing. With God all that is, which is worthy to be and ought to be commended, praised, honoured by men and Angels. We translate well, With God is Majesty: Others, With God is praise. Facob saith of Judah, the Kingly Tribe (Gen. 49. 8.) Thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise. The Vulgar Latine expresseth it thus; With God is fearfull praise. Some read the words as a Doxology, or giving of glory unto God, not as we, With God is terrible Majesty, but, unto God be reverent or terrible Majesty; that is, let the Glory and Majesty of God be acknowledged in all these things, which have been spoken of, in all thole strange changes and impressions which he works in the air, and which are obvious unto the eyes of the Children of men. with God is Majesty, with God is praise, or unto God be praise for all his works; and not only praise and Majesty, but

Terrible Majesty,

Majesty to be seared, to be reverenced, to be dreaded, to be trembled at. With God is terrible Majesty.

Hence note; First, Majesty belongs eminently unto God.

With God is Majesty. As the Scripture, speaking of power, faith, Power belongeth unto God (Pfal. 62. 11.) that is, properly, and fundamentally all power is in God; what-ever power is in the Creature, it is but a derivative from Gods power. So Majesty is originally and fundamentally in God; what-ever the Majesty

of the Kings and Princes of this world is, it is but a stream, a ray issuing from the Majesty of God, or, as the Greek version hath utyanosu n it, from his Magnificence. We may discern the Majesty of God Magnificentia. In every thing that he is, or is spoken of him; The Majesty of God is in his Greatnesse, his is a Great Majesty; The Majesty of God is in his Highnesse, bis is a High Majesty The Majesty of God is in his honour, his is a most honourable Majesty; the Majesty of God is in his Word, he speaks with Majesty, his is a most Majestical Word; the Majesty of God is in Works, Majesty is stampt and printed upon all that he doth. What shall I say? there is Majesty in the Wisdom of God, and Majesty in the Justice of God, and Majesty in the Goodness of God, and Majesty in the Power of God, there is Majesty in the Love of God, and there is Majesty in the Wrath of God, there is Majesty in the Truth and Faithfulness of God; every thing God hath, hath a Majesty in it; therefore he is said (Pfal. 93. 1.) to be clothed with Majesty. (Psal. 96.6.) Honour and Majest are before him. I, saith David (Pfal. 145.5.) will speak of the glorious honour of thy Majesty, and of thy wonderous works, Everywhere the Scripture fets forth the Majesty, the wonderful Majefly of God.

Note, Secondly;
Gods Majesty is a terrible Majesty.

The Majesty of Kings is dreadful and terrible; but I may say, the Majesty of Kings, the Majesty of Solomon, and of Aha-shuerus, the Majesty of Nebuchadnezzar, and of Alexander, either, first, in their Robes; or, secondly, in their Buildings; or, thirdly, in their Feastings; or, fourthly, in their Followers and Attendants (which four do chiefly hold out the Majesty of Princes) is but a mean thing, a very little thing, a nothing, in comparison of the Majesty, the Glorious Majesty, the terrible Majesty of God: His is a terrible Majesty indeed. And therefore they are rebuked (Isa. 26. 10.) Who will not behold the Majesty of the Lord. What? not behold such a dreadful Majesty! such a terrible Majesty! The Scripture sets forth not only the Majesty, but the terribleness of the Majesty of God; read at leisure, (Deut. 7. 21. Nehem. 9. 32. Psal. 47. 2.)

Therefore say unto God, how terrible art thou in thy works! (P. 66.3.)
Say this unto God, for (vers. 5.) He is terrible in his doings toward the children of men, even to all sorts of men, to the great as
well as to the small, to the high as well as to the low, to Princes
as well as to the People (Pfal. 76. 12) He is terrible to the
Kings of the earth. God is terrible in his Majesty to those who
have the most terrible majesty. And as the Lord can appear
terrible out of all places, so he is most terrible out of his holy places
(Psal. 68. 35.) that is, terrible Judgments are sent by God out
of his Sanctuaries or holy places, upon all them who prophane or
despise, who pollute or abuse his holy things. Take these two
Inferences from the consideration of the terrible Majesty of

First, We need not fear the terribleness of any creature, while we have the terrible Majesty of God with us. Ashe hath been, so still he is (as the Prophet spake, Isa. 25.4, 5.) A strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. And therefore the Prophet concluded in the latter end of the 5th verse, The branch of the terrible ones shall be

brought low.

Secondly, If God hath such terrible Majesty, then, as it is a comfort to his people against the terrible ones, so what a terrour fhould this be to those who are not his people, especially to those who are openly rebellious, who kick against his Majesty, and will not behold with reverence the Majesty of the Lord! Let them remember, With God is terrible Majesty. The Prophet forerels a day, wherein the Majesty of the Lord will terrifie the most potent sinners, and make them at their wits end (1/a. 2. 10, 12, 19, 21.) Enter into the Rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majesty. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low; it shall be upon the Cedars of Lebanon, &c. that is upon those that are high like the Cedars of Lebanan, and Arong like the Oaks of Balhan: And they shall go into the holes of the Rocks, and into the caves of the earth, &c. And why all this? the Text answers (ver [. 19.) For fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majesty, when he shall arise to shake terribly the earth. Othe terribleness of Gods Majesty,

to all those who tremble not at his Majesty! to the proud, who are listed up in their own thoughts, who are high in their own imaginations! yea, the Majesty of the Lord will be terrible to all impenitent sinners in that day, I may say, more distinctly, in these sour days.

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First, In the day of Conscience, or when their own Consciences are a terrour to them. How sad is it for a man to have God and his own Conscience terrible to him at once! When sinners are awakned, when God sets their sins in order before them, they are a terrour to themselves, as it is said of Pashur (Jer. 20.3.) The Lord hath not called the name Pashur, but Magor Missaib, that is, fear round about; I will make thee a terror to they self, they own Conscience shall be terrible to thee. A man had better sall into the hands of the most cruel Tyrants in the World, than into the hands of his own Conscience. But when a man is a terrour to himself, then to have the Lord a terrour to him likewise, to have God appearing in terrible Majesty, how dreadful is it! The awakened Conscience of a sinner carrieth in it, as a thousand witnesses, so a thousand terrours; and God in his anger is more terrible than a thousand consciences.

Secondly, God is terrible to sinners, in the day of outward trouble, when, as David speaks (Psal. 65. 5.) By terrible things in righteousness he answereth the prayers of his People. When God is doing terrible things in the World, how miserable is their case, to whom God also is a terrour in that day! A godly man when God is doing the most terrible things, shaking Heaven and earth, and (as it were) pulling the world about our ears, yet, because he finds God at peace with him, he is well enough. But as for impenitent finners, when God is doing terrible things, what will become of them? I may bespeak them in the words of the Prophet (1sa. 10. 3.) What will ye do in the day of your visitation, and in the desolation which shal come from far? to whom will ye flee for help, and where wil ye leave your glory? As if he had faid, who, or what can be a comfort to you, when God is a terrour to you? And therefore, another Prophet fore-feing such a terrible day coming, makes this earnest deprecating prayer (Fer. 17. 13.) O Lord, be not thou a terrour to me in the evil day. I know an evil, a terrible day is at hand, but Lord I beg this of thee, that thou wilt not be a terrour to me in that day; if men should be a terrout to me, and God a terrout

righteous, when God doth terrible things in righteousness, and such things he will do in the latter dayes. Take heed, left God

appear with terrible Majesty to you, in such a day.

Thirdly, How terrible is God to impenitent finners (when awakened) in the day of death! What is Death? In this Book Death is called The King of Terrours. Now, if when Death is making its approaches to a person, who lives in a contempt of the wayes and word of God, if when his breath sits upon his lips, ready to depart, and the King of Terrours is ready to tear his caul, and to rend his heart-strings asunder, if then, I say, God appears in terrible Majesty, what condition will such a one be in? To have Death the King of Terrours, and the Living, the ever-living God in terrible Majesty salling upon a poor creature at once, is a thousand deaths at once.

Fourthly, What will finners do in the day of judgment? that will be a terrible day indeed. The Apostle (2 Cor. 5. 10.) having faid, We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive according to what we have done in the body, whether good or bad; presently adds, knowing therefore the terrour of the Lord, we perfrade men; that is, knowing how terrible the Lord will be to impenitent finners, to all whom he finds in their fins, knowing this terrour of the Lord, and how terrible the Majesty of the Lord will be to such, in that day, we per swade men, we do all we can to pluck them out of their fine, and turn them to God in Christ Jefus, who faves his people from their fins; for, to be fure, that will be a most dreadful day to sinners. Thus the Majesty of God will be terrible to the wicked and ungodly, especially in these sour dayes. Only they who fear the Lord and take hold of his name by faith, shall be able to stand before his terrible majesty. God will not be a terrour, but a comfort, to them that fear him in every evilt day.

Further, the word (as was shewed before) signifies not only Majesty, but Praise, with God is terrible praise, dreadful praise.

Hence nore, First;
The Lord is most prase worthy.

With the Lord is praise. The Plalmist every where sets forth the

the praise-worthiness of God, and pressent this duty upon us. I shall not stay upon it, only remember, with the Lord is praise, that is, he is to be praised. And from the attribute of his praise, or that, with the Lord is terrible praise,

Note Secondly;

Even in those things which the Lord doth most graciously for us, and is to be highly praised by us (even in those) he is to be feared, dreaded, and reverenced.

God is to be praised, not only with joy and thankfullness, but with fear and reverence; for with him is terrible praise. It is the express word of Moses, in his song after the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea (Exod. 15. 11.) Who is a God like unto thee, glorious in holines, fearful in praises? We should not be affraid to praise God, no, we should be most forward to praise him, but we should have a holy fear upon our hearts, when we praise him. Praiscosthe work of heaven, from whence fear shall for ever be baniowed; there will be perfect love, and perfect love Cafes out fear, (1 fen. 4. 18.) What-ever fear hath torment in it (as all fear out of Christ hath) we shall have nothing to do with in that bleffed life: And even in this life, praise, which is the work of heaven on earth, should be performed with such a spirit of love, & joy as is without all base, tormenting fear; we should have so much love to God in, and for all the good things he doth, for our foules especially, ye and for our bodyes too, in dealing out daily mercies, that it should cast our all that fear which hath torment in it. Yet there is a fear which should possess our spirits while we are praising God, a fear of reverence I mean, which fear (I doubt not) will remaine in heaven for ever; Glorified Saints shall praise God with that fear, that is, having an everlasting awe of the Majesty of God upon their hearts. He is fearful in praises; and therefore let us so praise him, as remembering our distance, so praise him, as to be affraid of miscarrying in the duty, and so instead of prailing, displease him, in stead of honouring, grieve him. This duty of praise is very dreadful. The Pfalmist faith, there is mercy, or forgiveness, with thee, O Lord, that thou mayst be feared (Pfal. 130. 4.) Not only is the Lord to be feared in his wrath, and in the exe-I111 2

cutions of his justice, but he is to be feared in his mercy, & in that greatest expression of his favour towards us, the forgivness of our fins. When we are in the highest exaltations of the mercy of God, and of the God of our mercies, yet then should our hearts be affected with his fear. It is both our duty and our commendation so to fear God, as not to fin against him, or to be kept from sinning against God by the fear of God, that is, lest God should punish us for our fins, and give us to eat the bitter fruit of our own evil doings: But to fear God, because we hear, and are assured, that he is ready to pardon our fins, especially, to fear him when he hack given us a comfortable affurance, that our fins are pardoned; or, even then to be filled with the fear of his great and reverend Name, when we are actually praising him, and magnifying his free grace in Christ, for the pardon of them; this shewes a truly gratious spirit indeed. With God is terrible Majesty, and with God is terrible praise; he is at once to be praised and seared. All this Eliha would fix upon the heart of Job, from the confideration of the works of God, his providencial works, in the Air; how much more should this fear affect us, when we behold his terrible borks of providence upon the Earth? turning the world, as it well-upfide down, by the wonderful vicifficudes and revolutions which his hand brings to pass, respecting either Persons and private Familyes, or whole Kingdomes and Nations, With God is terrible Majesty.

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J O B, Chap. 37. Verf. 23, 24.

23. Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out; he is excellent in Power, and in Judgement, and in plenty of Justice: He will not afflict.

24. Men do therefore fear him : He respecteth

not any that are wise of heart.

These two Verses conclude the whole discourse of Elihu with Job. The 23d verse is Doctrinal, the 24th is the Use or Application of the Doctrine.

In the 23d verse we have a sour-fold Doctrine held out con-

cerning God.

First, The Doctrine of his Incomprehensibleness, We cannot find him out.

Secondly, Of his Power, He is the Almighty, he is excellent

in Power.

Thirdly, Of his Righteousness, he excells in Judgement, and plenty of Justice. But though he is thus full of Justice, yet he is

also very Gracious, and therefore,

Fourthly, We have the Doctrine of his Mercy and Tenderness towards the Creature in the last words of the Verse, He will not afflist. God is infinitely above man in Power and in Wisdom, yet he never useth either the one or the other to the oppression or wrong of any man; He wish not afflict. This is a very suitable peroration of the whole Narrative or matter declared, which E-

thu had so long insisted upon.

And having laid down this four-fold Doctrine concerning. God, he shows us the use of it in the 24th verse, where we have a practical Inserence from what was before asserted concerning God; Men do therefore fear him, or, therefore men ought to fear him. As it he had said, Seeing God is thus incomprehensible, thus powerful, seeing he is thus excellent in Judgement, &c in plenty of Justice, as also in Goodness and Mercy; therefore good men do, and all men should fear him. This is a very natural and undeniable Inference, yet Elihu doth not leave it bare, but adds a strong inforce-

ment in the close of the verse, why all men, the greatest of men, the wisest of men should fear God, For he respecteth not any that are wise in heart. The wisest, the greatest of men cannot carry it with God, by their wisdom or policy, by their greaness or power, therefore let them sear him. This is the sum and scope of these two verses.

Vers. 23. Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out.

Omnipotens
nominativus
absolute positus
Pisc.

That is, He is unsearchable and incomprehensible. The Original strictly read, is, The Almighty, we cannot find him out. The Almighty, is a Nominative absolute, as Grammarians speak; we supply that word (Touching) As it he had said, should we enter upon a discourse of the Almighty, we cannot find him our. Touching the Almighty. That, God is Almighty, and what the word Shaddai, here rendred Almighty, doth import, both been shewed and opened already in other places of this Book, especially in the fifth Chapter at the 17th verse, and in the eighth Chapter at the 3d and 5th verses; thicher I refer the Reader for surther satisfaction in that matter, and pass from it here; Touching the Almighty

We cannot find him out.

This also I shall pass over in a word, having spoken to it more sully (Chap. 11. 7.) where Zophar puts this Question, Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find him out unto perfection? In which Questions, Zophar challenged Job, or any man else, to set their understandings upon the renters, to put all their abilities to the utmost stretch, to find out God if they could, being assured they could not find him out unto persection. So then, this assertion in the Text, we cannot find him out, bearing the same sence with those Questions, I shall not stay upon it. Only,

Note; God cannot be compast by the enquiries of man.

Touching the Almighty, we have but this to say of him, We cannot say much of him, or, how much soever we say of him, we say but a little of what he is, or of what may be said of him, for we cannot find him out. We may find God, but we cannot find him out. God is to

be found by every humble, faithful seeker of him. The Prophet (Isa. 55.6.) calls us to that duty of feeking with an affurance of finding, Seek ye the Lord whilf he may be found; and so doth David (Pfal. 32. 5.) For this, that is, for pardon of fin, for grace and mercy, or, for this, that is, upon the experience which I have had of thy readiness, O Lord, to pardon my fins, even as soon as I confessed and acknowledged them, for this (I say) shall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayest be found. God may be found to do us good, and shew us mercy, when we feek him rightly; there is a finding time, or a time while God may be found. Some give no other limit to this while, or finding time, than the limit of this life; And to be sure if he be not found Dum adbue in while we are in this Life, he can neither be fought nor found af- hac vita estis. ter this Life. Yet more strictly, to feek him while he may be found Rab. Jonath. (as one of the Rabbins gloffeth that place) is to feek him before Deus invenire the Decree comes forth, as the Prophet Zephany speaks (Chap. Dotest ubique 2. 2.) It is possible we may seek God, and seek him too late, and tempore anto then there's no finding of him; Only they shall seek and find him, obsignata dewho feek him in the finding time, and they who do fo shall cer- creta. Abentainly find, as was faid before, God ready to do them good, and ezra. shew them mercy.

But how much soever, or how early soever we seek him, we cannot find him our, that is, we cannot find out how good, how merciful God is, or the utmost extent of his goodness and mercy, which Zophar in the place before cited, calleth a finding of him out to perfection. I may give you a five-fold Negative to shew

wherein God cannot be found out. First, We cannot find him out as to the infiniteness of his Elsence and Being, that's beyond the line of a created Understanding.

Secondly, We cannot find him out, as to the excellency of his Attributes, or the manner of his being; who can tell how wife God is, how hely, how just, how powerful, how good ! We may eafily find his divine perfections all the world over, we may find them in every leaf of the book of the Scripture, yea, in every leaf of the book of the Creature, but we cannot find them out any where to perfection.

Thirdly, We cannot find out the depth of his Counsels. God hath some (Arcana) secrets which he hath reserved in his own power

power, as Christ told his disciples in the first of the Asts (vers. 6.) when they would needs be prying into that secret of his councel, the time of restoring the kingdom to Israel. There are many councels of God locks up in his own boson, which we cannot find out, nor must we be bold and curious in searching into them.

Fourthly, The Lord cannot be found our, no not in his works of Providence, which are acted outwardly, or by which he brings forth his councels to act (Pfal. 77.19.) His foot steps are not known; not only are not any of his fecret councels known, but some or his very foot-steps, histreadings, his goings are not fully known. God goeth so that we cannot find where he goeth, he leaves no track (as we say) behind him (Rom. 11. 33.) How unsearchable are his fudgments (not only his councels, but, how unsearchable are his fudgments) and his ways past finding out. That's the very expression of the text. There are many providences of God, which we find and feel, which we fee, and cannot but fee, yet we cannot find them out, that is, we are not able to give a direct answer why God doth this or that, nor how this or that was done. Confider that Scripture (2 Chron. 31. 20, 21.) where we have a most fingular character of Hezekiah, and of his government; Thus did Hezekiab throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good, and right, and truth, before the Lord his God; and in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered. So the 31th chapter concludes; yet the 32d begins thus, After these things, and the establishment thereof, Sennacherib King of Assiria came and entred into Judah, and encamped against the fenced Cities. One would have thought, Hezekiah being thus zealous for the Reformation of the Church of God, in Fudah and Ferufalem, and having done all that concerned it with a persect heart, that surely such a Prince should have lived in peace and prospered all his dayes; yer, presently his Kingdome was invaded by a potent enemy, Sennacherib comes against him, and fills him, and all his people, with fear of utter subversion. This was a secret of providence, very hard to find out, a depth, which who can fathome? That when a good King with his Counsel, had been indeavouring a true Reformation, and that with a perfect heart, he should presently see war at his gates. Solomon faith (Pro. 16.7.) When a mans ways please the Lord, he makes his enemies to be at peace with him: Yet it was no sooner said of King Hezekiah that his wayes pleased the Lord, but the very next paragraph of his Chronicle reports an enemy making war upon him.

Fifthly, Take this also; We cannot find out God in the dispensations of his Free Grace in the Gospel; there are such mazes, such mysteries of love, and goodness, and kindness in Jesus Christ, as (though it be our duty to be searching after them, and in them, all our dayes, though we ought to be continually digging in those golden Mines, to find out the treasures hidden there, yet) we can never find them out. Therefore the Apostle (Ephes. 3. 8) calls them, The unsearchable riches of Christ; not, unsearchable, because it is unlawful to search after them, but, unsearchable, because when we have searched to the utmost we cannot find them out; as he speaks in the close of that chapter; that we may be able to comprehend with all Saints, the height and depth, and length, and breadth, and to know the love of Christ that passeth knowledge. Under all these considerations (and many, many more) God is pass finding out. Whence take three brief Inferences.

First, Do not search too far (that is, beyond what is written) into the counsels of God, no nor into the works of God. For though, as it is said (Fsal. 111. 2.) the works of God are great, sought out by all them that have pleasure therein; yet they that have the greatest pleasure in them, cannot in all points find them out. It is our duty to search the works of God, but to think we can find out the bot-

tom of his works would be our fin.

Secondly, If the Almighty cannot be found out, no not in his works of providence, then, Take beed of censuring or sinding fault with his works. Shall we censure what we cannot know, and find fault with that which we cannot find? He that censures what another doth, should first have the full compass of what he doth, and be able to look quite thorow it, which the most eagle-eyed sout in the world cannot, as to what God doth in this world. And therefore though you see no reason for what is don, do not complain, for there may be a reason for the doing of it, which you do not see; and the reason is often such, and lyes so deep, that you cannot see it. And know this is reason enough, why you should forbear censuring what is done, because God doth it, though you can give no other reason why it is done.

Thirdly, If God be past finding out in his morke, and much more

Kkkk

in himself, then be not so much as discontented with his works. You are not yet come to the bottom, you have not seen the last man born (as we say) you know not what God will make of it, till he hath done all; therefore take heed of murmuring and discontent, (Zech. 2.13.) Be filent, O all flesh, before the Lord, for he is risen out of his hely habitation. Though his rising be visible, yet we cannot see all the concernments and intendments of his rising; therefore be silent altogether from fear and discontents, and though not from all enquiries about it, yet from a presumption of finding out all by enquiries: For, As toushing the Almighty, we cannot find him out. That's the first.

שניא כה

He is excellent in power.

Teat's the second. Mr. Broughten reads, He is huge of strength. The word rendred excellent, properly fignifies, to encrease. There is no encrease of the strength of God; what he is, he ever was, and ever will be; there is neither encrease nor diminution of his ffrength. But because things which are alwayes encreasing grow to a huge bigness and strength, therefore he is said to encrease in strength, or (as our translation imports) to excelin power. He that excels in power is excellent in power. The word rendred power, implieth the power of doing (the Greeks call it Nyams) or, of activity, a power put forth in working; he is excellent in power, that is, in ability to do whatfoever he pleafeth; and when is said he is excellent in power, in this kind of power, it notes, that the power of God in doing, doth wenderfully excel all that ever he hath done. The effects or acts of the power of God are nothing, as I may fay, to the faculty of his Power; he can do more than he hath done: He is to far from having over-acted himfelf, I mean from having done more than he can do again (which hath been the case of many mighty men, and may be the case of any man, how mighty a doer soever he is) that he can do infinitely more than he hath done, if he himself pleaseth; he is excellent in power, or of excelling power. I have (as was lately faid) opened this point, of the power of God, in other places of this Book, whither I refer the Reader; yet taking the power of God (as the word is properly here intended) for his working power,

Ejus virtus in infinitum excedit omnes affelus fuos. Aquin,

Note; The working power of God is excellent, so excellent that it exceeds the apprehension of man.

There is a two-fold power of God, and in both he is excellent.

First, His commanding power, his power of Soveraignty, or Authority; that's a most excellent power, 'tis a power ever all,

whether things or persons.

Secondly, His power of working or effecting that which he commands. Some have a power of commanding, yet want a power er of working, they want a power to effect that which they command: but whatfoever God hath a mind to command, he hath an hand to effect and bring it about; he can carry on his work through all the difficulties and deficiencies which it meets with in or by the creature; He can do his work though there be none to help him in it, though all forfake him, and with-draw from his work; yea, he often worketh though there be not so much as an Interceffor to move him to work (Ifa. 59 16.) He saw that there was no man (to do any thing) and wondered that there was no Interceffor to entreat him to do somewhat for them. Things were in a great exigency, and there was not only no man that would put forth a hand, but there was no man that would bellow a word for redress, no man would bespeak either God or men sor help: What then ? must the work stand still ormiscarry? no, faith the text, His own arm brought salvation unto him, that is, set it ready at hand for him to bestow upon his people; or, his own arm brought that falvation to his people, which they greatly needed, and he graciously intended, though he had not the contribution of a word towards it from any creature here below, one or other. God alone is self-sufficient, and toman All-sufficient. Such is the working power of God, that he can work, not only when he hath but a little help, but when he bath no help at all.

Secondly, The excellency of the working power of God appears in this, that he can and will poduce the defired effect, and bring his work to pass, though many, though all men oppose it and rise up against it, though they set both heart and hand, wit and will, power and pollicy, to cross, yet to crush it. The Lord is so excellent in power, that he both can and will do his work through

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all opposition; though mountains stand in his way, though rocks stand in his way, he will remove them, or work through them. (Ifa. 43.13.) I will work, and who skall lett it? Neither strength nor craft, neither multitude nor magnitude, neither the many nor the mighty can lett it, if the Lord undertake it. Take a double Inference from this.

First, 's is matter of great comfort to all that fear God in their weakest condition and lowest reducements, when they are fatherless, and have none to help them. As the Lord is excellent in his working power, so he usually takes that time, yea stayes that time, till his servants are under the greatest disadvantages, till they are at worst, before he will put forth his power and work. The Apostle saith of himself (2 Cor. 12. 10.) When I am weak, then am I strong, that is, then have I the strength of the Lord coming into my help. And as it is with respect to particular perfons, so to the whole generation of his children, when they are weak, then are they strong, that is, then they have the strong God, the God excellent in power, appearing and working for them.

Secondly, This also is a fad word to all that fland in the way of Gods working power; His working power quickly works through all power, and can work it down. Babylon is a mighty powerful enemy, but (Rev. 18.8.) we read of the downfal of Babylon, and that her ruine shall come as in one day : But, how shall this be effected? The answer is given in the close of the verse, For strong is the Lord God which Judgeth her. Suppose there should be no power in the world ftrong enough to pull down Babylon, yea, suppose all the powers in the world thould stand up so- Babylon; 'tis otherwise prophesied, for, the Kings of the earth shall hate the whore and shall make her desolate, and naked, and eate her flesh, and burn her with fire; but suppose, I say, all earthly power should appear for, rather than against Babylon, yet this is enough for us to rest in, strong is the Lord which Judgeth her. He is excellent in power, and as it followeth,

In Fudgment.

This comes in, lest any should think, because God is so excelent in power, so mighty in strength, that therefore he would carry things by violence or by meer force, as the fons of men, the mighty Nimrods of the world fortimes do: If they have strength and

and power to do such or such things, they regard not Judgment nor Justice, they look not whether right or wrong; therefore Elihu, when he had said, God is excellent in power, presently adds, and in Judgment. As if he had said, Though the Lord excel all in power, and is able to crash the might yest as a moth, yet he will not oppress any by his power; the worst of men shall find the Lord as much in judgment and righteoufness, as he is in strength and power. And therefore, O Job, be assured, God hath not done thee any wrong, nor ever will. This I conceive to be the scope of Eliha in the connexion of these two, The excellency of God in Judgment, as well as in Power.

But what are we to understand by judgment, in which Elihu faith God excells? In answer to this Querie I shall first shew that Judgment is taken four ways in Scripture, and then prove that God is excellent in Judgment, with respect to every one of them.

First, Judgment is an ability of judging. A man of judgment, and a wife man are the same. When we say, such a man, is a man of Judgment, or a judicious man, we mean, he is a prudent man, he is able to discern things that differ, he knows how to order, state and determine doubtful things aright. In this sence we are to understand it here, the Lord is excellent in judgment, that is, in wisdome and prudence to fet things right, and to give every one his right, he fees clearly how to mannage all his affayres and purpofes by righteous meanes to right ends. The prophet gives God the glory of this title expressely (Isa 30.18.) The Lord is a God of judgment : Bleffed are they that wait for him. That is, the Lord is infinitely furnished with wisdom, he knows exactly, not only what ought to be done, but how and when to do it; therefore waite for him. And 'tis encouragement to waite, when we have a person of judgment and understanding, a discreet and prudent person to waite upon. God is a God of judgment, in this sence, theref re bleffed are they that waite for him.

Secondly, Judgement in Scripture is taken for that moderation, or due measure, which is observed in any thing that is done. This follows the former; for unless a man have a Judgment or crue understanding in the thing it self, he can never hit a right measure of ir. Thus, I conceive, that Scripture is to be underflood (Math. 23, 23.) where Christ denouncing or thundering out woes thick and threefold against the proud hypocritical Phari-

sees, he tells them, To pay tythe of Anise and Cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy; that i', either they did not give a right judgment according to Law, or their legal Judgments were given with rigour, not at all attemper'd, mixt, and moderated with mercy. Of fuch the Apostle Fames speaketh (Chap. 2. 13.) He shall have judgment without mercy that hath shewed no mercy, and mercy rejoyceth against Judgment. In this sence the Lord is excellent in Judgment; For as he hath wisdome and understanding to see what is just & right, 10 in Judgment he remembers Mercy: His patience is great before he gives Judgment; and his moderation is great when he gives it. He dealeth not with us according to our fins, nor rewardeth us according to our iniquities, (Pial. 103. 10.) that is, his Judgmen.s are not proportion'd to the greatness of our fins and iniquities; For (as it followeth at the 11th verse of that Pfalme) as high as the Heaven is above the Earth, fo great is his mercy towards them that feare him. Therefore the Prophet brings in the Church praying thus (Fer. 10. 24) O Lord, Corrett me (I conceive it is not a direct prayer for Correction, but a submission to it: As if he had faid, I will not murmur, nor rebell against thy Correction; O Lord, Correct me) but with Judgment, that is, with due moderation: It cannot be meant of Judgment, as it notes the effest of divine displeasure, but Correct me moderately, or, as another text hath ir, in measure, as thou useft to correct thy people. This meaning, is plain from the opposition in the next words, Not in thine anger, least thou bring me to nothing. Anger transports men to do things undecently & without moderation; we quickly exceed our limits, if carried out in passion; and though, that anger which the Scripture attributes often to God, never transports him beyond the due bounds of his wisdome and justice, yet when God is said to do a thing in anger, it notes his going, as it were, to the utmost bounds of justice; this caused the Church to pray, O Lord, if the cup may not pais from me, if it cannot be, but I must be corrected, then I humbly and earnestly beg, thou wouldst be pleased to correct me in Indoment, not in anger, least thou bring me to nothing. What the Church prayed for here, the Lord promifed elsewhere (Jer. 30. 11.) I will not make a full end of thee, but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished. Thus God is excellent in Judgment: He abates the severity of his proceedings, and allayes the bitterness of the cup by

some ingredients of mercy. Thirdly, Judgment in Scripture is put for the reformation of things when they are out of order. In this sence it is used (John 12.31.) Now is the Judgment of this world. Our late Annotators tell us, that by Judgment is meant reformation: As if Christ had said, I am come to set all things in order, that have been out of order and disjoynted in the Tewish Church, and every where else; Now is the Judgment of this world. In this sence God is excellent in Judgment, or he excells in this Judgment, that is, he is for reformation, he will fet all things right, he will make crooked things strait, he will make the rough places plain. John the Baptist came before Christ in this work, yet in this work Christ is before or exceeds John the Baptist. The Lord (1sa. 4.4.) will purge away the iniquity of the daughter of Zion with a spirit of Judgment, and with a spirit of burning, that is, with a reforming and a refining Spirit: And the Lord will fend forth this Judgment unto victory (Matth. 12. 20.) that is, he will do it thorowly, he will ove come all the difficulties, and put by all the obliacles which binder the perfect reforma ion of things as well as of persons. That's the importance also of that great promise (1/a.1.25,26.) I (faith the Lord) will turn my hand upon thee (or take thee in hand) and purely purge away thy dress, and take away all thy tinn, (that is, all those corruptions which have crept in upon thee) & I will refere thy Judges as at the first, and thy Councellors as at the beginning. Things and persons are usually best at first. The new broom (ay we) (weeps clean. As time consumes all things here belo v, so it co rupts most things; and therefore when the Lord promiseth to restore them to a primitive purity, he promifeth the purell rellauration; all which is summ'd up in the 27th verse, Sion shall be redeemed with Tudgment; which is not only, if at all, intended of a redemption by Judgment on her enemies, but by that reformation which sind would work upon themselves, in taking away their dross and tinn, Restoring their Judges as at the first, and their Councellers as at the beginning. Such a Judgment is spoken of (Isa. 30 22.) To shall defile also (that is, utterly difgrace and deface) the Covering of thy. graven Images of Siver, and the Ornamens of thy molten Images of Gold; thou halt cafe them away as a menstruous cloth, thou halt lay unto it, get thee bence. This is the Judgment of reformation, which God hath and will further work among his people, till Sion be built up in perfect beauty, and Ferusalem become the praise of the whole earth. Thus also God is excellent both in power and in Judgment.

Fourthly, Judgment fignifies those evills which God brings upon impenitent sinners; that's a very frequent notion of Judgment in Scripture, and the Lord is excellent in this Judgment;

and that

First, Upon his own people, when they provoke him and sin against him (1 Pet. 4. 17.) If Judgment begin at the house of God, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel. There's Judgment beginning at the house of God, that is, God will bring evill upon his own house, the Church, even fore troubles and persecutions. The Lord will not spare them, who have been slight with him, forgetfull of him, formal in profession, or wanton and vaine in conversation. This is a great part of the Lords excellency in Judgment, he brings Judgment upon his own house. The Lord, saith the Prophet (Isa. 5. 16.) shall be exalted in Judgment, and God that is holy shall be santified in righteonsness, that is, in bringing his righteous Judgments upon Israel, his peculiar people. We find that Gospel Prophet Isaiah often interweaving the wyre and whipcord of corporal bondage, with the silk and scarlet thread of Sions deliverances.

Secondly, In Judgment towards his enemies (Pfal. 149.9.) He will execute on them the Judgment that is written, and that is no inconsiderable, nor easie Judgment. The servants of God may smart forely under these Judgments, but the wicked and rebellious shall perish, and sink under them. How dreadfull is that profession or protestation which the Lord made by Moses (Deut. 32. 41.) If I whet my glittering sword, and my hand take hold of Judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them

that hate me.

Some, possibly, may object, Surely there is no such appearance of Gods excellency in Judgment upon the wicked of the world, the enemies of his name and wayes. It grew to a Proveib (Mal. 2.17.) Ye say, every one that doth evill is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them, or where is the God of Judgment? Evill men seem to be good in the eyes of the Lord when they enjoy good; and if it be so, (said some) Where is the God of Judgment?

I answer, First, the Lord hath lest testimony enough upon Record, and written is in the blood of many thou ands, to justifie himself, that he is excellent in Judgment, by taking vengeance on the wicked. Did he not excell in Judgment upon the finning Angels? (2 Pet. 2. 8. Jude 6.) was he not excellent in Judgmenr, when he deftroyed the whole world for fin? when he burnt Sodom and Gomorrab with fire for fin ? How many instances might I give of this from Scripture? God hath sufficiently declared himself excellent in this punitive Judgment.

I answer, Secondly, God indeed doth not presently execute Judgment upon all the wicked; we should rather be lead by sence than by faith, if he should do so, if he should imite sinners as soon as they provoke him; yea, if God (hould take that course, he must even break the world to peices, and delitroy whole generations

at once.

Thirdly, God suffers sinners a while, that his councels may be fulfilled; for though the wicked obey not the command of God, yet they fulfill the councel of God (Alts 4. 28.) and they do

it chiefly when he with-holdeth Judgment from them.

Fourthly, Unless the Lord did a little give stop to the execution of Judgment in this kind, it would neither appear how good, nor how bad some men are. Let some have but a little power in their hands, and the world at will, then you shall see whither they will go, and what they will do. And when bad men are suffered to go on unpunished, and to be a punishment to others, then it appears more fully how good some are, and that in a twofold respect. First, because they refraine from evill, though they see that they also possibly might do it (impane) and not suffer in this world. Secondly, because they hold fast both their protession and practife of Godliness, how much soever they suffer for it in this world from evill men.

Fifthly, God is executing Judgments upon wicked men, while he seems to spare them from judgment (Pro. 1. 32.) The prosperity of fools flayeth them. Some think a wicked man is mightily favoured when he is in prosperity, no, that prosperity is his de-Aruction, and deffruction is Judgment in perfection. The table of a wicked man is made his foare, his full table fattens his heart, which is the forest of all judgments. To be un enable is worse then any punishment of sense; to be hardned or heartned in doing

LIII CVIII, evill, is more penall than the suffering of any evill. Now while wicked men escape the suffering of evill, they grow resolved, that is, hardned and heartned in doing it, or to do it. Take Solomons observation or experience in the case (Eccles. 8. 11.) Because sense sense against an evil work is not speedily executed (upon themselves or others) therefore the heart of the sons of men is fally set in them to do mischief. So then, there are many invisible judgments upon wicked men, when we see no hand touch them, nor judgment near them; God gives them up to vile affections, and to a seprobate mind (Rom. 1. 26, 28.) to their own counsels (Psal.81.12.) and to strong delusions by others (2 Thes. 2. 11.) These heavy loads of judgment may be on their hearts, upon whose backs we see not so much as a graine weight of judgment. Thus the Lord is excellent in judgment in all the notions of it; I have instanced source.

Now, lest any should think that God at any time breaks the rule of justice in his zeale for this latter fort of judgment, or while he is powring out vengeance upon the wicked, therefore it follows in the next place,

ורב צרקה

And in plenty of Justice.

Justitis est constant & perpetua voluntas suum cuig; tribuendi. Justin: God executes great wrath upon sinners, but there is great Justice, plenty of Justice in it. There is store and abundance of justice and righteousness in his most rigorous judgments. A little justice is a most precious thing; how precious then is plenty of justice! Justice in it self is the giving of every one his due; and where justice is in any man, it constantly bends and enclines his heart to do so, his especially with whom there is (as in God) plenty of justice. And indeed, what-ever God hath, he hath plenty of it; He hath mercy, and plenty of it, he is plenteous in mercy (Pial. 103. 8.) And with him is plenteous redemption, (Pial. 130. 7.) There is also plenty of justice in him.

Some men have no Justice at all in them; though their office and place be to do Justice, yet they have nothing of justice, no tincture of it in them; They neither feare God nor regard man, to do him any justice as the unjust Judge is described (Luk. 18.2.) and with most Justice is a very scarce Commodicy, they have but a very little of it, and they distribute it very poorly and sparingly. Where almost is the man to be found that hath plenty of justice

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in himself, and distributes it plentifully to other? There was surely a great scarcity of Justice in the Justicers of Jerusalem, when the Lord by his Prophet (Jer. 5.1.) offered to pardon the whole City, if upon the sending forth of his Writ of Enquiry, the name of any one man could be returned that executed Judgment. O that Dearth of Justice! and in what place may we hope to find plenty of justice among men, when so little of it was to be found in Jerusalem, the City of God? yet this may comfort us, that though there be little of it in or among men, there is plenty of it in God. And that there is plenty of justice in God, I would demonstrate

these five wayes.

Chap. 37.

First, He hash plenty of justice, who deals justly with every man. God giveth every man his due, all his due, and nothing bur his due. More distinctly, take this in two branches. First, he that rewards all that are good, with good, not this or that man, not his kinfman, or his friend only, but every man that is good, with good, he hath plenty of Justice: Thus doth God. The respect which God hath to the perions of good men, is like the respect which good men have to the commands of God, it is univerfall, he respects them all. As they give him plentifull obedience, having a respect to all his Commandements, so he gives them plentifull Justice, he hath respect to all their persons, to all their workings, to all their wayes, which are holy, just, and good. Again, Secondly, He hath plenty of Justice, who punisheth all that do evil, not winking at, nor sparing friends or kindred. Surely then there is plenty of justice in God; for as he rewards all the good with good, so he rewards all evil men with evil; that's all the reward they shall have, and they shall have plenty of it (Pfal. 31. 23.) He plenteonsty remardeth the proud doer. The proud first have and drink up the last, the residue, the remainder, the very dregs of the bitter cup, of the cup of trembling, as the Hebrew elegancy used by the Pialmist intimates. Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil; for there is no respect of persons with God, (Rom. 2.9, 11.) As he will punish none but evil-doers, so he will punish them every one, except they repent.

Secondly, With the Lord is plenty of Justice, for he knows the whole Compass of Justice, he hath the clear Idea of it in his understanding, he knows all the rules of it, or rather is the rule of it. All the rules of Justice came out from him, and are but the

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figni-

fignification of his own mind, therefore he must needs know them, and be well skilled in them. Some men have a good mind to do justice, yet have no plenty of it, because they are unskillfull in the rule of it, the Lawes both of God and man. A Judge that is blind through ignorance, and hath not a gift of knowledge and understanding in the Law, faulters in doing, or is unfit to do Juflice, as much as he that is blinded with gitts, or byafs'd by relations and private passions; he that is blind the former way cannot have, and he that is blinded by any of the latter wayes will never do pleaty of Justice. But as the Lord hath an infinitely clear eve as to the rule, fo no gift can blind him, nor can any relation pur out his eyes from feeing a fault, nor divert him from punishing it (Ifa. 27. 11.) It is a people of no understanding (either to do good, or to depart from evil) therefore he that made them (that's a neer relation) will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them (that's the same) will shew them no favour. As if the Lord had said, Justice shall be done, though the work of my own hands be undone by it; There's plenty of justice. And as God knows the rule of the Law perfectly, and will not be turned ande from it; so he knows the matter of fact perseally, and cannot be mislead about that; Upon which mistake some, who have great knowledge of the rule of the Law, yet do not plenty of juffice: they often condemn the innocent, and acquit the nocent, because they find not out the truth of their cause, but are misinformed about it. Bur. the Lord is a God of knowledg, by him actions are weighed; he knows not only the matter of Law, but the matter of fact too, and therefore with him there is pleasy of Justice.

Thirdly, There must needs be plenty of Justice with God, because he knows the spirit and heart with which every man acts, he knoweth whether a thing be done maliciously, or meetly by a surprize of passion (Justice is guided much by that consideration in some cases) The Lod knows the heart, wherewith every thing is done, and the design or ayme of every man in doing it. As he will make manifest the Councels of the heart, at last to all, so now the Councels of the heart are manifest to him; therefore

he must needs be plentiful in justice.

Fourthly, God is clothed with sufficient power to execute justice, therefore with him there is plenty of ir. Some have a good mind to do justice, they know the Law & the fact too, yet are shortned

thormed and fraitned in doing justice, because they have not power, or are not able to carry it out against potent offenders, but are forced to forbear the doing of justice, because at present they cannot. The doing of justice requireth strength of hand, as well as Arength of Law, and integrity of heart. David had a good mind to do justice upon Foab (though neerly related to him) when he had, under a pretence of friendship, slain Abner; but he faw himself under a necessity of forbearance at that time, and therefore said, I am this day weak (though anounted King) and thefe fons of Zerviah be too bard for me. But there are no fons of Zerviah too hard for the Lord, he can call them to an account at any time: David knew that very well, and therefore he referred Joab to Gods Juffice in the close of that verse (2Sam. 2.39.) The Lord shall reward the doer of evill according to his wickedness. Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be frong in the dayes that I shall deal with thee ? saich the Lord by his Prophet (Ezek. 22. 14.) They cannot, therefore with him is plenty of Tustice.

Fifthly, The Lord cannot but have plenty of justice, for his very nature is justice. Man doth that readily and plentifully which he doth naturally; it is as impossible for God not to do justice, as it is for him not to be. A man may be unjust, and yet be a man, but God cannot be God, and not do justly. Seeing then it is his nature to do justice, there must needs be plenty of justice with him: And how severe soever the judgments of Cod are, there is nothing but justice in them. Justice, Justice, shalt thous follow, was the coasinand of God to the Judges of Israel by Mofest, that is, as we translate, that which is altogether just shalt thou follow (Deut. 16. 20.) As that promise of peace, peace, notes plenty of peace (Isa. 26. 2.) so this command of doing Justice, Justice, notes plenty of Justice. Certainly then the Lord himself will do justice plentifully. Justice, Justice will he do. Take two. Inferences from this affection.

First, This truth is matter of comfort to, and sweetly smiles upon the just, that the Lord hath plenty of justice in him; for then, doubtless, he will performe all his good words of pomise to them. Tis the part of a just man to performe his word; God is faithful to his word, what ever men are. It hath been a d, If you would know what some men mean never to do, then look to their

Eorum quæ appetebat ne qui quam præ le ferebat, & corum quæ diquam facers das de Tibe-

promises. It was a very dishonorable Character which Suidas gave of the Romane Emperour Tiberius; He never made frew of having what he defired, or had a mind to, nor ever minded to do what he had promused. But God, the great God, is so true and just to his word cehar ne quic- or promise, that his people may take strong consolation from every word of promise. (Tit: 1. 2.) In hope of eternal life, which God volebat. Sui- tleat cannot lie hath promised. No man could ever challenge God of any faylure in promise. There are four things ascribed to God in Scripture, which may affure us that he will be just in performing all his promises. First, He remembers them all (Pfal. 111.5. Ffal. 115.12.) Secondly, He is unchangeable and in one mind, (Job 23. 13, 14.) Thirdly, He is the Almighty, and ever furnitht with power to perform them. Fourthly, He is most faithfull,

and will not deny nor falfifie them (Heb. 10. 23.)

Secondly, This truth bath a most dreadfull aspect and frownes terribly upon the ungodly and unjust. That God hath plenty of Justice, Justice enough to bestow among them all, is enough to confound them all; though they make a Covenant with death, and with hell are at agreement, yet their Covenant and agreement shall be dissolved, (Ila. 28. 15, 16.) The Scripture speaks Juflice often to finners, specially to those unjust ones, who weigh the violence of their hands (Pfal. 58. 1,2.) that is, who oppress with a kind of exactness, who do not tumble it out palpably, or in a lump, but weigh it out, now a little, and then a little: The Lord knoweth how to deal with fuch cunning perverters of Juflice, and will at last make them acknowledge, both that themfelves had no justice in them, and that himself hath plenty of it. And who now, laying these five considerations together, will not acknowledge, that the Lord hath plenty of justice? But the inference which Elihu makes from it in the close of the verse, feems, if not a kind of denial, yet a great abatement of it, for having faid, He is excellent in plenty of Justice, the next words are, He will not afflict.

This may feem at first hearing, a strange connection; will he nor afflict? how then hath he plenty of Justice? Doth not God afflict? who afflicts then? have men the power of affliction in their hands? or hath Satan the power of affliction in his hand? Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground, said Eliphaz (Chap. 5. 6.) Saith not the Scripture every where, affliction comes down from heaven, or that 'tis of God? did not Job say (Chap. 1. 21.) The Lord bath taken, that is, afflicted me, by taking away my all of this world? and doth not God himself say (Pfal. 89. 30, 31, 32.) If his children forget my Law, I will punish their transgreffion with a rod, and their iniquity with ftripes ? How then faith Elibu, God will not affl it?

I answer, First, in general, Elihu speaks thus in answer to a doubt, or to remove a feare arising upon the whole, of what had been said of God. For if God be such a God, so excellent in power, and in Judgment, and in plenty of Justice, then surely our case is very sad, may some say, who can abide to be neere or stand before such a God? O, saith Elihu, seare not, He will not

afflitt. More particularly, I answer,

First, Though God be excellent in Judgment, and plenty of Juflice, yet it may be said, he will not afflict, because in some sense, he hath not a will to afflict, or he doth not afflict with his will, that is, he delights not to afflict, he hath declared himself more ready to shew mercy, than to execute judgment. In one Prophet he saith, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dyeth (Ezek. 18. 32.) bens. Vatable and another Prophet faith of him, He doth not willingly afflist, nor grieve the children of men (Lam. 3.33.) This Prophet was there bemoaning the greatest affliction that ever befell the people of God, yer, faith he, God doth not afflict willingly, he doth not afflict with his heart, as the word there is expressed in the Margin; when he afflicts, it is as it were a work of his hand, not of his heart, yea a work that he would gladly rid his hands of. What once that cruel I yrant Noro laid when he was to light a O Daym vel-Warrant for the Execution of an offender, How glad should I be if lem nestire li-I could not write my name! (This spake he, possibly, when his heart teras! was as full of blood as it could hold) yet thus he spake to fignifie a great un villingnels to afflict. This is most true of the great God; though he be a God of excellent power and judgement, and plenty of justice, yet he doth not afflict willingly; he could be glad, that he might never have an occasion to afflict, that he might never be provoked to draw his fword, no not so much as to use his rod in this world.

Secondly, It may be faid, God will not afflist, because he never afflicteth without a just cause; his unlimited power never

rempts

tempts him, nor doth any passion transport him to a desire of taking undue revenge upon any; he hath plenty of Justice, and therefore cannot afflict, but when he sees great reason for it. Did not our sin call for our affliction, were there not some great provocation on our part, or some prosit to come to us by it, we should never hear of, nor feet his rod. The Apostle saith (Heb. 12.9, 10.) We have had Fathers of our flesh, who for a few dayes chastened us after their own pleasure, they to ease themselves, have put tis to pain, but the Lord doth it for our prosit, that we might be partakers of his boliness. There is just cause we should be afflicted, when we provoke God by sin, or when he would purge us from our sin, or make us more holy. And as it may be said, God will not afflict, because he doth not afflict us but when there is cause for it, so

Thirdly, Because he doth not afflict us but when there is need (1 Pet. 1.6.) nor more than there is need; we shall not be afflicted an hour longer, nor have a grain more of weight in the burden of our cross, nor a drop more of gall and wormwood in the cup of our forrows than we have need of (1 sa. 27. 7, 8, 9.) Hath he smitten him, as he smote those that smote him? in measure, when it shooteth forth thou wilt debate with him. As if it had been said, he shall have no greater a measure than is both useful and needful; First, to humble him for his sin; secondly, to subdue and mortishe his sin; thirdly, he shall have no more than is needful to exercise his graces, his saith and patience; no more, fourthly, than is needful to make him thankful for deliverance, and sensible of mercy when it comes. Thus, as God, who hath plenty of Justice, will not afflict us, but when there is need, so not more than

is need.

Fourthly, It may be said, He will not afflict, because he doth not afflict us more than we can bear; he tenderly considers our strength, what we are able to stand under, & how long we are able to stand under it; he will not break our backs nor our hearts (unless by godly sorrow for, or from sin) by affliction. God (saith the Apostle 1Cor. 10. 13.) is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Hence when it is said (Lam. 3. 33.) He doth not afflict willingly, &c. it followeth (vers. 34.) to srush under his seen all the prisoners of the earth. The Lord makes

many his prisoners, yet then his bowels are opened towards them, he will not crush, nor tread them down, as mire in the streets. I (saith the Lord, Isa. 57. 16.) will not contend for ever, &cc. For (if I should) the Spirst should fail before me, and the souls which I have made. I know what your spirits can bear, and I will contend no longer than I know you are able to bear ir. Hence that Promise (Pfal. 125. 3.) The rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, least he put forth his hands to ovil. The Lord knows the rod may prevail over us so, as to put us upon the doing of evil, and therefore he will take order that it shall not.

Thus we may safely understand this affertion, He will not afflist, that is, he afflicts not willingly; he afflicts not till there is need, nor will he afflict more than needs, nor more than we are able, or himself will enable us to bear; he will either support us under, or give us deliverance out of all our afflictions in due

ime.

I might hence, or from the whole, infer a double duty.

First, Be Patient under affliction. Secondly, Be Comforted in affliction.

For God doth so afflict, that he may be truly said not to afflict, But having met with occasions for the ministring of such like counsels to the afflicted, from other passages in this book, it may suffice

only to mind the Reader of them here.

This spake Elihuin the close or peroration of his discourse, to shir up Job to consider all the dealings of God with him; he would have him sit down with these four Doctrinal Conclusions upon his heart, that God is Excellent in Power, and in Judgement, and in plenty of Justice, he will not afflict. Surely he will not afflict more in measure, nor longer in time than is need, as Job seemed in his passion, to intimate and charge God, for which he had several reproofs before.

Thus far I have opened these words, as they stand in our tranflation. There are two or three different readings, especially of the latter part of the verse, which would not be altogether omitted, and therefore I shall rouch at them, and then proceed to the next and last verse of this Chapter, which is also Elibn's parting, word, or the conclusion of his large and close discourse with Tob.

The first different reading is much infisted upon by some In-

Omnipotens quimur amplies est virtue, sed nitudine justitiæ non affitget. Merc.

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terpreters. Take it thus; The Almighty, whom we cannot find quem non affe- out, is great in power, but he will not afflet in judgment and plenty of justice. This translation transposeth those words, which we Judicio mrg place in the end of the verse, he will not afflict, to the middle of it, and it renders the copulative particle And, by the advertative But: This makes the fence of the whole verse more plain and easie than the former, as also to rise up more fully to the purpose of Elibu. As if he had thus fummed up all that he spoke before, or had contracted it into this fum.

Quamvis sit potenti Jimus tamen homines ante creatos

Which things, seeing they are so, as I have declared, we may certainly conclude, that the Almighty is so full of majesty and power, that we are no way able to reach, compass and find him out: Yet not withstanding he is so full of goodnesse and mercy, that he is very sparing tanti facitut towards men, and will not afflict them according to their demerits, non utator om- nor up to the extremity of justice. This exposition holds out clearnipotentia sua ly that temperament of the power and justice, with the goodness jure to prome- and mercy of God, which Elihu undertook to demonstrate, at the vitiseorum affli. fifth verse of the thirty fixth Chapter, and so forwards; He is gendos. Jun. great in power, but he will not afflict in judgement.

> Take this note from it: How great soever the power of God is, yet he doth not afflict finful man ascording to the greatness of his power, nor the utmost line of his justice.

The Lord is full of mercy, full of sparing mercy, he spareth his people, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him (Mal. 3. 17.) And indeed if God should affiret in plemy, that is, in extremity of justice, what would become of the best, of the holiest of men? Who can withstand the power of the great God? who can stand in judgment before him, If he should mark iniquities? (Pfal. 130. 3.) Woe to the most innocent man alive, if God should mark iniquities, and not forgive iniquities. And there fore it follows in the next or 4th verse of that Pfalm, But with thee is forgiveness. As God is most bountiful in civing, so is he most merciful in forgiving. This holds the head of believing and repenting finners above water, and keeps them from finking into the bottomless gulfe of despaire, that they have a forgiving God to go unto, and that there is none like him in forgiving (Mich.

(Mich. 7. 18.) None forgiving to freely (Ifa. 42. 25.) to abundantly (Ifa. 55.7.) none to constantly and continually as he. There is for giveness with thee; 'tis a concluded a perpetual act. Now because God pardons so freely, he detinot, he will not, he cannot because he will not, punish extreamly. God dealerh with sinners in measure, because he dealeth with them in a Meliator. Though he be great in power, yet he will not offlict according to the greatness of his power or the plenty of his justice.

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Secondly, Some of the Jewish Doctors render the latter part of the verse thus; whereas we say, He is excellent in judgement, and in plenty of justice, be will not affect, they say, He will Judiciam & not afflict judgement and plenty of justice; that is, as they give the copiam justitie non affliger. i. gloss, Though he be great in power, yet he will not pervert justice. e. jus non per-We may well say justice is afflicted, when it is perverted; and nerter Merc. then justice is perverted, when any man is wronged, or when at ex Rabbinis. any time the wronged, or wrongfully afflicted, are not righted and relieved. Thus God will not afflict justice. These translators do not joyn the word affiet (as we) to the person of man, but to the justice of God, or the actings of his justice. He is great in power, but he will not afflict, he will not oppress judgement and justice. This is doubtless a great truth in itself, yet I doubt whether it be the truth intended by Elihu in this place. Certainly, God will not do any man wrong, though he hath power enough, all power in his hand, yea, God will do all men right; though he be great in power, yet what affliction soever he layeth upon the creature shall be no affliction to justice or judgement, to that justice or judgement with which God is cloathed, and will declare by executing it among the children of men. But I pass this as over-nice.

Thirdly, Others render thus, He is excellent in power, and in Non respondejudgement, and plenty in justice, he will not answer. The wo d bit. Tygur. which we translate, to affliet, with some alteration in the Hebrew Probaven si pointing, signifieth also to answer; and so the words carry a sence of in sonte nunc the absolute soveraignty of God, who is so great in power, and in eum sit 1339 judgement, and plenty of justice, that he will not answer; that is, non potest absolute to a superior of the sent that is and plenty of justice, that he will not answer; that is, non potest absolute to the sent that is and plenty of justice, that he will not answer; that is, non potest absolute to the sent that is a superior to the sent that it is a superior to the s though men complain of his justice, or think he hath done them ter legi, quam wrong, or at least is over-severe towards them, yet he will not offiger, vexar. come to an answer, he will give no man a reason of his wayes. Of this Elihu spake expresly (Chap. 33.v.13.) He giveth not an ac-

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count of any of his matters. God is so powerful that no man can call him to an account, and so just in the use or exercise of his power, that there is no reason why any should. But though this also be a great truth, yet because Elihu had afferted it fully before, as also because this translation is grounded upon a change in the ordinary pointing of the Hebrew word, from which I conceive, with others, we ought not eafily to recede, therefore I shall not stay upon it.

Omnipotentem non invenimus tali sit, tamen talem eum non experimur in mandatis sui, ut immodice nos oneret, aut immodicam a nobu exiget justiniam, &c. Rabbi Sele. bam.

Not shall I more than mention that apprehension of some Rabbins, who thus give out a 4th sence or interpretation of the words; whereas we say, As touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out, he is excellent in power, and in judgement, & c. They say thus, although the Almighty be great in power and in judgment, and plenty multum robore of instice, yet we find him not fo; That is, we do not find him putting & judicio; Et out the greatness of his power, or the exactness of his justice, in the commands with he hath laid upon us, or in the duties with he hath required of us; he doth not over-burthen us, nor exact hard things of us. And they instance in the rules which God gave about offerings and facrifices; he required (fay they) of some only a turtle dove, or a pair of young pigeons, of others but a lamb, or a bullock, fuch things he required for facrifice as were of easie price, and might eafily be obtained, he did not put us upon the getting of strange and rare beafts, as Buffes, or Unicorns, or any fort of creamoth & Ram- ture which may put us to much paines in getting them, or to much expense in buying them. And as in these, so in other things God hath graciously condescended to our weakness, as appears every where in the Law. Thus the Jewish Writers make our their translation: and though it be a truth, that in one sense the Ceremonial Law was (as St Peter, in that council at Ferusalem declared Alts 15.10) A Yoak, which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear, yet there was much favour mixed with it, which caused the Lord to appeale in that point to their own consciences, or to make themselves the Judges (Mch. 6. 3.) Omy people, what have I done unto thee, or wherein have I wearted thee? testifie against me. And as God, though great in power, did not over-lay the Tems, so much less hath he over-laid us Christians with duty (17ch. 5.3) His Commandements are not grievous. And Cheist faid of his yoke and burden (Mat. 11.10) My yoke is easte, and my burden is light. Christ may lay what burdens he pleaseth upon us, but he is not pleased to lay any grievous burdens upon us. This therefore is a truth, both as to them and us, yet I conceive it beside the design of Elihuin this place, and I only mind the Reader of these different interpretations, of all which some good improvement may be made. So much of this verse: The whole discourse of Elihu concludes in the next.

Verf. 24. Men do therefore fear him : He respecteth not any that are wife in heart.

This verse containeth two things.

First, a practical inference, by way of use, from that fourfold do-Erine held forth in the former verse, concerning God. As if Elibu had said, For as much as the Almighty is incomprehensible, so that we cannot find him out; for as much as he is mighty in power, and judgement, and plenty of justice, so that we can neither avoid him nor delude him, therefore men do fear him.

Secondly, We have an enforcement of this Inference, by a cogent reason, For he respecteth not any that are wife in heart. Who these wise-hearted ones are, whom God respecteth nor, will ap-

pear in the opening those words,

Men do therefore fear him.

The word rendred Men, properly fignifieth, weak or feeble men, as also men in affliction, men under the afflicting hand, or rod of Virmifer & God. This Arica acception of the word, renders the opposition imbecillus. more cleare, letting the lowest of humane frailty, against the highest divine power. Yet we need not sand strictly upon the Grammatical fignification of the word, but may take men, in all their divisions and formes; men, be they high or low, assisted or in prosperity, ought therefore to fear him.

Only, it may feem most surable, in way of application, to Fob, for Elihu to use this word in that restrained sence; Afflicted feeble men do fear him, As if he had said. O fob, thou art a weak man, a man greatly afflicted, thou hast been long under the rod and chastning hand of God, therefore thou oughtest to fear him, and not expo-

stulate the matter with bim, as thou hast done. Men do

Therefore fear him.

This illative, Therefore, hath reference (as was intimated) to all that was said in the former verse, yet we may take it specially inאנש

these two particulars. Therefore men do fear him ; Why?

First, Because he is so great, so immense, so incomprehensible, fo powerful, so just, because he hath such plenty of justice, there-

foremen do fear him.

Seconoly, Therefore men do fear him; Why? Because, though he be cloathed with power, justice and judgement, yet he will not affl &, that is, he will not afflict excreamly, in any of those sour sences before given; he moderates his power by compassion in his sharpest dispensations towards his people; there is a great mixture of love & mercy with his justice, therefore men do tear him. As if Elibu had thus bespoken Job; Others fear God because they experience or find him kind and good to them, even in affiction, how then cometh it to pass, that thou hast from the beginning carried it, as if God mirt no kindnes nor shewed any tenderness in his afflicting of thee? why is it that thou hast cursed thy day? that thou hast complained that ever thou wast born, that thou hast so often wished for death? Why bast thou said that then art not only pressed, but even oppressed, that though thy cause be good, yet thou hast born the heaviest loads of evill ? Why doft thou strive with him? These are no arguments of thy fear, but of an impatient and fretful spirit, if not of a kind of rage and fury against God himself; These are no proofs that thou doest acknowledge his goodness in afficting thee, and so fear him, for by these thou dost rather charge and accuse him of harshnesse and severity.

Now though it may be faid (as it hath often in the opening this Book) that Job spake such words partly in the heat of his passion, parely through the greatnesse of his pain, partly through the infirmity of his flesh, as also being much moved and provoked by the grievous centures of his friends: yet not with anding all this, his words were such as neither could, nor ought to be wholly excused; so that Eliha might say, Men do therefore fear him. But, O Job, then hast carried it, as if thou didst not fear him, thou hait not behaved thy felf like other men, under the same, or a like afflicting hand of God. For though Job is to be reckoned among men that feared God, yea, in the highest form of those that feared him, yet he failed much in his affliction, as to the expression of

this holy fear.

Thus we have that two-fold reference, in which Elibu faith,

Therefore do men fear him.

Firft,

First, Because of his great power.

Secondly, Because of that great tendernesse which he useth in the exercise of his power: Which yet Job did scarce acknowledge, as appeared by his complainings and murmurings about the dealings of God.

Men do therefore fear him, so we render, yet 'tis consider-Ideo imebunt able, that the Hebrew runs in the future time, Men will therefore eum homines. fear him, that is, men should therefore fear him, or men therefore Verbum futuri ought to fear him. Words in the Hebrew of a future fignification, temporis folet bear the importance of a present duty; what good its said men denotari idquod will do, is as if it had been faid, they do, or ought to do. And as deber, quod exto the duty here spoken of, the fear of God, we may make this con-pedit fieri, quaclusion, All good men do fear God upon those accounts, and all men idem crit, quod (hould, or ought to fear him. The thing is to be done, whether timere debent, men do it or no. Where an expresse command is given, every timere jubentur man concerned is bound to obey; and where, or who is the man that is not concern'd in this command, fear the great and gracious God? Men do therefore

Fear him.

What it is to fear God, was shewed largely at the 28th Chapter of this Book and the last Verse, therefore I shall not stay upon Deum vereri. it hear: Only remember the word signifieth, a gracious, a child-Deum vimere. like fear, not a fervile flavish fear. There are two words, by which Proprieveretur the fear of God is expressed in the Latine tongue, which we may Deum pius, si-expresse thus, to fear God, or, to be afraid of God. Good men fear mer superstition God, but wicked men are afraid of God. Now though the word fus. Tarren banc are often used promiscuously, and to fear, is sometimes taken in interpretes non the worser, sometimes in the better sence, yet, here we are to observant; nam. take it in the best sence, Therefore do men fear him, that is, they possintimers ought to fland in awe and not fin against him, they should submit ujurpant pro to, not dispute his dealings. The fear of God, in the general notio verevi. Drus. on of it, is nothing elfe, but Piety and Religion; of the whole worthip of God. To fay a man is godly or religious, is all one as to say, he is a man fearing God. Now, whereas usually a general rule is urged to lead in a general practife, here a general practife is urged as leading to a general rule. Alen do therefore fear him. theory when our backs are burdened with forcess, and bowed

Whence we may take this general Observation;

It is the duty of all men, of every man, to fear God.

Men, one or other, ought to have high and honourable thoughts of God, they ought to have holy and reverentiall thoughts of God, they ought to put far away from them all flightness, and vanity of spirit, when they think or speak of God, they ought to put far from them all boldness and presumption, when they have to do with God. To put away all flight and bold thoughts of God, to take up high and reverential thoughts of God, this, this is to fear God. Yet a little further, and more distinctly, I conceive here in this place, to fear God, stands in a four-fold opposition.

First, Men should fear him, and not murmure at what he

doth.

Secondly, They should fear him, and not lightly pass by what he doth.

Thirdly, They should fear him, and not question him about what he doth.

Fourthly, They should fear him, and not curiously search or

prie into what he doth.

The Lord having such power to do, such wisdom in doing, such a mixture of mercy with justice in all that he doth, men should only admire and improve his doings, not murmure at, nor lightly pass by, nor question, nor curiously pry into what he doth. Thus to fear God as faithful in all his works, and to fear offending him in any of our own works, is the summe of Godliness. Hear the conclusion of all (saith Solomon Eccl. 12. 13.) Fear God, and keep his Commandements: this is the whole of man, that is (as we translate) the whole duty of man.

Secondly, Taking the word men more firstly, as fignifying,

nor strong, or mighty men, but weak, afficted men;

Note; When God is afflicting us, we ought to be much in the fear of God.

What? when the hand of God is upon us, shall our hearts be lifted up against him? or in our selves? what! shall not our hearts stoop when our backs are burdened with forrows, and bowed down

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down with a cross? Not to fear God when we are at surthest remove from fear, or trouble in the world, is an argument of a very bad heart; but not to fear him when fear is round about us, or, when himself is chastening and correcting of us, argueth a much worse frame of heart. Holy David gave this character of his enemies (Psal. 55. 19.) Because they have no changes, herefore they fear not God. What shall we say of them who fear not God though they have many changes? Such changes, I mean, as Job felt, and cryed out of in the bitterness of his foul (Chap. 10. 17.) Changes and mar are against me: And its conceived, that Elihu aimed particularly at Job in this passage, as if he were the man, who, though under great changes, and in great troubles, yet behaved himself unlike those who truly fear the Lord.

Thirdly, Note; It is so much the duty of man to fear God, that it may well be supposed of all men, that they fear him.

He can scarce be looked upon as a man, who doth not fear God. Doth he know himself to be a weak man, who doth not tremble at the remembrance of the Almighty God? Doth he know himself to be a finful man who doth not tremble at the remembrance of the holy, of the most holy God? This duty of fear is due to God upon so many accounts (even common accounts) from man, that we may conclude, surely, every min feareth God. Shall we not fear him who is incomprehensibly great in power and in judgment, and in plenty of justice? What! not fear him who made us, and preferveth us, who feeds and cloaths us? What! nor fear him in whose hand our breath is, and all our wayes? These, and many more, are common accounts, upon which all men may fee both reason and their own engagement to fear God. So then, as because it is so much the duty of a Son to honour his Father, and of a Servant to fear his Master, therefore the Scripture supposerh all Sons and Servants doing it (Mal. 1.6.) A Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Master. He doth not say, a Son ought to honour his Father, and a Servant his Master, but, he honoureth, or doth honour. That person deserveth not the name of a Son that doth not honour his Father, nor is he worthy the name of a Servant that doth not honour his Mister. Now, I say, as the Scripture takes it for granted, upon this ground, the naturalness Nnnn

of the duty, that every Son honours his Father, and every Servant his Mafter, to it doth, and so may we, that every man search God. And doubtless, if a Son or Servant deserves not to bear the name of these relations, unless they honour and fear Father and Master, how much less do they deserve to be called Men, who do not fear God, the Almighty God!

Again, from those two particular heads, upon which this fear is grounded; First, Therefore, with respect to the power and justice of God; Secondly, Therefore, with respect to the mercy

and tenderness of God,

Note, First;
Godis to be feared because he is so full of power and juffice, then especially, when by some eminent and special act of providence, he declares his power, and is doing justice.

By how much the more God puts himself forth in his power and justice, by so much the more he is to be feared. 'Tis prophefied (Rev. 15.3.) that when God shall shew forth his great power, and execute the severity of his justice upon Antichrist, then, they who shall get the victory over the beast, and over his image, &c. shall sing the Song of Moses, the servant of God, and the sing of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy wayes thou King of Saints. What followeth? Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorifie thy Name? The vengeance to be poured upon Babylon will be to great a demonstration of Gods power and justice, that it will give occasion to all men, the faithful especially, yea, it will call upon them aloud to fear God: Who shall not fear thee? As if he had faid, surely there is no man so stupid, so stout-hearted, or so hardhearted, but if he see God in, or at this work, he will have dreadful apprehensions of him, and fear before him. Yet this is not spoken of such a fear as Christ hath fore-told shall seize upon and possess the hearts of men before his glorious appearing (Luke 21. 25, 26.) There shall be fignes in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars, and upon the Earth, distress of Nations with perplexity, the Sea and the Waters roaring, mens hearts failing them for fear, &c. It shall not be (I say) such a fear, a heart-failing, but a heart-enlarging fear; not fush a fear as they have, or rather, as hath hath them, who have their hope only in this life (these shall fear with an amazing, desponding, despairing sear) but such a sear as they have, who, through grace, have risen up to a full affurance of kope, or, are begotten again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that sadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them.

The second ground of this sear, is the mercy and goodness of God, who though he be thus powerful and just, yet he will not afflict, that is, he will not afflict without mercy and tenderness to

his people.

Hence observe;

God is to be feared because he is so gracious and full of compassion, even while he doth assist.

There is mercy with God not to afflict, that's sparing mercy, and therefore he is to be feared; there is mercy also with Godin moderating our afflictions, that's sparing mercy too, and therefore he is to befeared. The graciousness of God manifested someimes in sparing to afflict us, and often in afflicting us sparingly, should move us to fear him both greatly and alwayes: and if sparing mercy should move us to fear him, then much more should forgiving and pardoning mercy. When the Lord (Exod. 34.6, 7.) Paffed by before Moses, and proclaimed, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, &c. At this proclamation of grace, Moses (vers. 8.) made haste, and bowed his head towards the earth and worshipped. How graceless then are they, who when they hear that God is gracious, merciful, and abundant in goodness, fear him not, but grow wanton and abuse his kindness!

Now they who fear God, upon the due confideration, either of his power or goodness, find their hearts,

First, Much enlarged in the service of God, or in doing the

work, and walking in the wayes of God (Ifa. 60. 5.)

Secondly, This fear keeps their hearts to a close communion with God (fer. 32. 32.) I will put my fear in their heart, and they shall not depart from me. We usually not only depart, but run from those whom we fear; but the true fear of God, Covenant-fear makes us cling about, and keep close to him.

Nnnn 2

Third-

Thirdly, This fear keeps up good thoughts, and high estimations of God in the worst times, or when he is pleased to bring the greatest troubles upon us. An Israelite indeed, who feareth the Lord and his goodness (Hess. 3.5.) will say (let God do what he will with him) Truly God is good to Israel (Pfal. 73.1.) Let us consider whether we have these effects of a gracious sear working in our hearts upon the remembrance both of the power and mercy of God. Men do therefore fear him:

He respecteth not any that are wise in heart.

These words (as was touched before) press the former duty of searing God, inferred from the greatness and excellency of his power, judgment, justice, and mercy, yet surther upon us. As if he had said, Men do therefore fear him; Why? Because, He respected not any that are wise in heart, that is, in general, he respects none who are so wise, or wise in such a way, as not to fear him upon those fore-mentioned grounds.

He respecteth not.

אדו Videre. ירא Timere. The word is, seeth not. There is an elegant paranomisse in this verse, the words which signisse to fear and to respect or see, being very near in sound. God doth not see them with respect, who do not see him with sear: He seeth not any that are wise in heart. It cannot be meant of the ordinary sight of the eye, that, he seeth not the wise in heart; God seeth clearly who they are: Nor can it be meant of the common apprehension of the mind, that, he knoweth not the wife in heart; God understands sully what they are; It must be meant then of a seeing with liking, or special approbation: God seeth not the wise in heart so, as to like or approbation: God seeth not the wise in heart so, as to like or approbation translation is full and clear to that sence, He respecteth not, or he regardeth not any that are wife in heart, that is, he takes no notice of them, they are not pleasing to him. Or thus, He respecteth not any that are wife in heart, that is, as they fear not him, so he is not assaid of them. He respecteth not any that are

Wise in beart,

Oc, wife of heart. But some may say, Doth not God respect not regard, doth not he take notice of those that are wise of heart?

Whom

Whom then doth he respect or regard? of whom will he take notice, if not of the wise in heart? Hath the Lord any respect for sooles, for ignorant men, for ideors, for sotts? Surely men that are wise in heart, are not only very amiable but honourable in the eyes of God; Why then is it said, He respecteth not any that are wise in heart?

I answer, The wife in beart, are of two forts.

First, there are tome wife in heart, who are so only in their own opinion, in their own conceits or eyes; they have great thoughts of their own wisdom, and therefore as they are apt to despile men, so they are far from the fear of God. There is a wisdom in some men opposed to the fear of God, whereas true wisdome in any man is the beginning of that fear, as that fear is called the beginning of wisdom (Psal. 111.10.) The vulgar Latine varieth Qui sibi vithe former part of the verse, yet renders this latter part by way dentur effe faof gloss, rather than translation, They that feem to themselves to be pientes. Vulge wife; and indeed the wife in heart, whom God respecteth not, are the proudly wife, the felfishly wife, such as are wife only in themselves and to themselves, such as have only that wisdom which the Apostle calleth, the wildom of the flesh, or, the carral mind (Rom. 8.7.) which is not subject to the Law of God, nor indeed (tillmortified) canbe. He that is carnally wife disputes the commands of God, and takes the boldness to censure his works; such wise men God respecteth not, yea, they are under his greatest disrespect.

Secondly, O.hers are truly wife, graciously wise, wife for their souls, wife for heaven, wife for happiness, submitting their wisdom to the will of God, and doing his will: They that are thus wise in heart, the Lord respects, and highly respects; how can he do otherwise? seeing this is the character of God himself (Job. 9. 4.) He is mise in heart, and mighty in strength. And as God is wise in heart, so according to their line and measure, they that are godly, are mise in heart too. Therefore taking our translation, the wise in heart intended by Elihu, must needs be those that are only carnly wise, politickly wise, na usally wise, that is, wickedly wise,

or at best vainly, or vain-gloriously wife.

Further, should we take the wife in heart, for those that are truly wile, gracicusly wife, yet it must be acknowledged, that even hey may so mis-behave themselves, as to miss present respect from God.

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Yea, Taking wife in heart, in this best sence, for the graciously wise, it is not for their wisdom and holiness that God respecteth or savoureth them. As he will not chastise them without cause, nor correct them but for their good; so when he doth them good or raiseth them up, when he sheweth them any favour, or giveth them any mercy, he doth it not for their wisdom-sake, or holiness-sake, but for his Sons-sake, or for his own Name-sake. Acts of favour from God, are purely from his free grace, not from any desert in man; so that every way his mercy is from himself, and undeferved by us. Herespecteth not any that are wise in heart.

First, As the wife in heart stand in opposition to those that sear God, spoken of before, being so stout that they do not humble themselves in his sear,

Note; True misdom is alwayes joyned with the fear of God.

Yea, as Job concluded (Chap. 28. 28.) The fear of the Lord, that is mission, and to depart from evil (which none do but they who fear the Lord) is understanding.

Secondly, Note;
God regardeth no man for his wisdom, who doth not fear him.

Let men be never so learned and wise, never so prudent and politick, if they have not the true fear of God before their eyes, he values them not, he will not cast an eye of savour upon them, they shall have no countenance with him, no honour from him. The most wise, the only wise God cares not for the wisest of men, who stand so much upon their own understanding, as to stout it out with him. He is not at all moved (unless to displeasure) by their wisdom, who are pussed up with a conceit of their wisdom.

Thirdly, When 'tis said, He respecteth not any that are wise in heart,

Note; Wisdom, without the fear of God, will do no man good at last, nor can it keep him off from evil.

Let no man think by his wisdom, policy, or subtilty, to keep himfelf out of the reach of God. If men will not fear and honour him, he knoweth well enough how to deal with them, and to recover his honour upon them.

Note Fourthly;
Let men be as wise and crafty as they will, God is not afraid of them, as if they could do him any hurt, or spoil his designes, as if they could out-wit him, and over-throw his counsels.

Some take upon them, as if they by their wifedom could hinder Gods purposes, and counter-work him, as if they could over-reach or undermine him. We are much afraid of wife men; If such a wife man, if such a head-piece, be against us, we think surely he will works us a great deal of mischeife. When David found his fon Absalom rebelling against him, and Achitophel joyning with him, he prayed that God would turn his counsell into foolighness. (2 Sam. 15. 31.) David feared that Achitophels going over to Absalom, might have carryed the whole business against him: But God doth not regard a whole conclave of Achitophels, he cares not a straw for their plottings and contrivings. The Lord is so far from fearing the counsels of the wife in heart, that he can defroy them by their own wisdome, and not only undoe their counsels, but undoe them by their counsels: The pit which they have digged, they shall fall into it themselves, and be entangled in the lime-twiggs: which they have fet up for others. All this the holy Prophet intended when he said of God (Isa. 44. 25.) He frustrateth the tokens of the lyers, and maketh the diviners mad: He turneth wife men back ward, and maketh their knowledge foolish. Diviners grow mad when they fee things issuing quite contrary to their predictions and expectations. He that can destroy the wife with their own wisdom, needs not fear the wisdom of the wifest. 'Tis the noblest way of vanquishing an enemy, when we wound him with his own weapons, and turn his own Artillery upon him.

Thus God dealeth with the wife in heart; they are nothing in his hands, they cannot put the least stop to what he hath a purpose to do; but he can put a stop to all their purposes. The foolishaels of God (faith the Apostle, I Cor. 1. 25.) is wifer than men. He faith also in the third Chapter of the same Epittle (verf 19.) The wisdome of this world is foolighness with God; for it is written (and that writing is taken out of this Book of Fob, Chap: 5.13. He taketh the wife in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wife, that they are vaine; and vain he knoweth them to be in a twofold respect: First, because sinfull or evill in themselves; Secondly, because he knows how to make them barren or abortive, successless and ineffectual unto the wife: So that they all become like most Adventurers at a Lottery, going out with their heart's full of hopes, but returning with their bands full of blanks, Disappoyntment, Disappoyntment, being written upon all their counsels and undertakings.

Again, Taking the wife in heart for those who are truly wife,

godly wife,

Learn, Fifthly;
God will not forbear, when he seeth cause to afflict those who are indeed the wisest and holiest of men.

Let no man think, that because he is wise or holy, he must not therefore be touched or medled with. Some conceive the chief design of writing this Book, was to let us see this truth, That let men be never so holy, never so upright, or godly, yet they must not claime priviledge from the cross, nor complain when they are under it, that God deals not well with them. In this Job overacted, supposing there was no cause why such a man as he, should have such severe chastenings and rebukes; but let men be never so wise, never so good, God may see cause to lay his chastening rods upon them; and had the Lord nothing else to say for it, his soveraignty will bear him out in it against the best of men. The clay must neither say to the Potter, why hast thou made me so not why hast thou marr'd me so? Be silent O all sless (good as well as bad) before the Lord.

Laftly, Observe; What-ever favour, what-ever mercy God bestoweth upon the heliest and wifest of men, he dath it not with respect to any wisdome, boliness, or goodness in them, but for his own Name sake, or because he will.

He respecteth not the wife in heart. No man can merit the least favour from God; his is free grace. All good cometh to us through the Son of his love, and it was meetly of his love, that ever his Son came to us and dyed for us. Therefore let us not fay, such a one was a good man, such a one was an holy man, therefore it was fo and fo with him. As what we are or can do cannot oblige him (when he fees cause) from giving us correction, so he is un obliged as to what we are or can do, in giving us salvation, whether temporal or eternal. He respecteth not the wise in heart.

There are yet two other readings of the words, which I shall

fet before the Reader, and then conclude all.

The word which we translate respecteth, fignifying properly to Is certe non infee, some keep to that propriety of it, and render the text thus; venitsapientes, He seeth not all wise in heart; that is, when the Lord looketh a quoscung: inmong the children of men, he doth not find many, yea scarce any tuesur. Beza of them wife. Thus the fense runs in connection with the former part of the verse, Men should be so wife as to feare God, and not dispute any of his proceedings; But he feeth or knoweth that all are not so; yea he findeth that a great many, even the most of men by much are very fools. The truth is, all men naturally are no better (Psal. 14. 2.) The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and (eek God; but he did not find one wife in heart among all the children of men, as Descendants from the first Adam. And when he cometh among the best of men, men of a second birth, the seed and descendants of the second Adam, he doth not see them so wise as to give him glory in every condition, nor under every dispensation, yea, he finds a great deal of folly in their hearts. Taking this sense of the words, Elihu seems here again to give Job a close rebuke, as not having behaved himself so wisely under his sufferings, as became a man professing the feare of God. Tis rare to find a man wife throughout, a man having true wisdome of 0000

heart, and ordering himfelf according to the rules of that wifdome, in all the turnes and changes of his life.

Secondly, The latter part of the verse is translated thus; Men, though never so wife in heart, cannot see him. This reading tuns the eum omnis sepi- construction of the words quite another way : The former said, ens corde, vel He seeth not all wise in heart; this saith, Men wise in heart cannon v debunt not see him. The sence of which reading may be thus conceived; emnes sapientes. The wifest men cannot see God, he is both invisible and incomcorde, q.d mul. prehensible. As men cannot see him at all by sence, so neither lus corum ip- can they comprehend him by reason; As the eye cannot take him sum videbit. in who is invisible, so neither can a finite understanding take him in, who is infinite in understanding. We have a fight of God through faith in this life: Thus Mofes faw him who is invisible (Heb. 11. 27.) We see him here darkly, through a glass, the glass of his word and works, of his ordinances and providences (1 Cor. 13.12.) But the clear fight of him face to face, the fight of him as he is, is referved to hereafter (1 Cor. 13. 12. 1 John 3. 2.) These two latter readings of this latter part of the verse, hold out usefull truthe for surther meditation; but I adhere to our own as more clear in the originall, as also more sutable to the scope and intendment of the foregoing discourse.

Elihu having said this, fits down and is filent, leaving Job to

meditate upon and confider what he had faid.

And now, no fooner had Elihu wound up his bottome, and made an end, but behold, God began and took Job in hand; he spake to him out of the whirlwind, at the beginning of the next Chapter, and brought him upon his knees before he had done with him, as will appeare further, if the parience of God give time and opporsonicy to go fo far. To him be all the praise and glory, who hathe belped thus far. Amen.

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